DONNIE DARKO

BY

RICHARD KELLY

LUCID ENTERTAINMENT

WGAw # 696283

JANUARY 18, 1999

FADE IN:

EXT: MORNING SKY

A dense, liquid-drenched formation of STORM CLOUDS develops... around a HEXAGONAL cauldron of light.

MAIN TITLE

EXT: CARPATHIAN RIDGE -- DAWN

TITLE CARD: 01 OCT 1988

We descend upon CARPATHIAN RIDGE, a crescent-shaped CLIFF that extrudes from the dense VIRGINIA evergreens above a deep ROCK CANYON. The cliff marks the end of a DIRT ROAD that winds down from above.

Fourteen year-old DONNIE DARKO is asleep at the edge of the cliff. With his bike collapsed next to him, he is shivering, curled up in the fetal position.

He slowly opens his eyes and looks around, disoriented by the morning light. He stands up, looking down into the expansive rock canyon.

After a moment of hesitation, he takes his bike back up the hill.

Donnie pedals down into the suburban village of MIDDLESEX, VIRGINIA. This, upon the climax of the Reagan Era, is SUBURBAN PARADISE... a concentrated WASP upper-middle class.

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- DAY

EDDIE DARKO (age 44) pulls the cord and his gas powered leaf blower ROARS to life.

THE DARKO HOUSE appears through a blowing mass of autumn leaves. A two-story colonial sits in the center of an acre of grass, adjacent to the seventh hole of the SARASOTA GOLF COURSE. This house is pristine... beautiful. The envy of the neighborhood.

A WHITE FORD TAURUS STATION WAGON pulls up the driveway.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

MONTAGE

ROSE DARKO (age 42: beautiful) lays on her bed in the fetal position, reading a book.

ELIZABETH DARKO (age 17: also beautiful) is painting her toe-nails in her bedroom.

The opening theme of "GROWING PAINS" comes to an end as TRACY GOLD drags KIRK CAMERON back into the house.

Donnie's little sister SAMANTHA DARKO (age 11) sits within spitting distance from the screen. Samantha holds some small HAMSTER in her lap.

Moments later the rest of the Darko family convenes for dinner. ROSE puts the PIZZA on the table. ELIZABETH arrives from downstairs.

ROSE
Samantha please put Ariel back in her cage. And for the love of God wash your hands.

ELIZABETH
Well dad... I hate to break the news to you before we eat, but I've decided to vote for Dukakis.

EDDIE
(faking a gag reflex)
That's unfortunate. He's a good man... but perhaps when you have children of your own that need braces and you can't afford them because half of your husband's paycheck goes to the federal government, you'll regret that decision.

ELIZABETH
First of all, my children won't need braces. Our entire family has straight teeth.

DONNIE
What if you get knocked up by some British guy at Harvard?

ELIZABETH
(amused hatred)
I haven't been accepted yet. Besides... I'm not gonna squeeze one out until I'm thirty.

ROSE
(eating her pizza with a fork)
If you think Michael Dukakis will provide for this country prior to the point when, as you so eloquently put it, decide to squeeze one out, then I think you're misinformed.

SAMANTHA
When can I squeeze one out?

DONNIE
(to his sister)
Not until like... eighth grade.

ROSE
(to Donnie)
What did you just say?

ELIZABETH
Once again I'm persecuted for being an independent thinker.

DONNIE
Maybe you should be the one in therapy Elizabeth. Then mom and dad can pay someone two-hundred dollars an hour to listen to all of your independent thoughts so we don't have to.

ELIZABETH
Maybe you'd like to tell mom and dad why you stopped taking your medication.

An awkward silence.

ROSE
(to Donnie, surprised)
Excuse me? When exactly did you stop taking for your medication?

SAMANTHA
When can I squeeze one out, mom?

ROSE
(To Samantha, curt and dismissive)
Never.

DONNIE
(glaring at Elizabeth)
You... FUCK-ASS.

Eddie gives his food a hard swallow.

ROSE
I demand that this conversation end.

ELIZABETH
Did you just call me a Fuck-ass?

ROSE
That's enough.

ELIZABETH
(to Donnie)
Well you can go... suck a FUCK.

DONNIE
Tell me Elizabeth... how exactly doe's one suck a fuck?

ROSE
(disgusted... shaking her head)
...at the dinner table.

SAMANTHA
What's a fuck-ass?

Despite his brave efforts to hold back laughter, Eddie Darko sprays a mouthful of Pepsi across the table onto his wife.

INT: ELIZABETH'S ROOM -- EVENING

ROSE, freshly showered, walks through the hallway delivering clean clothes to her children like a maid.

"KISS ME DEADLY" by LITA FORD blares from her stereo as she talks on the phone, getting ready for the evening.

ELIZABETH
(into the phone)
We are not stopping by on our way there.
(beat)
Because she's a skankaholic.

Rose enters and turns the stereo volume down, then shuts the door behind her.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
(covering the phone)
What?

ROSE
How did you know...

ELIZABETH
(cutting her off)
I didn't realize that it was such a big deal.

ROSE
It is... a big deal.

ELIZABETH
I caught him flushing pills down the toilet one morning. He knows you check the container.

INT: UPSTAIRS BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Rose opens the medicine cabinet and removes one of several prescription containers. The label reads: DR. LILIAN THURMAN, Ph.D.

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie lays on his bed, reading "COLLECTED SHORT STORIES" by GRAHAM GREENE. His room is an organized wreck. His walls are a shrine to M.C. ESCHER, LED ZEPELLIN, ANSEL ADAMS, and JOE THEISMAN.

Rose puts his clothes at the end of his bed and begins to pick things up off the floor.

DONNIE
Get out of my room.

Rose bitterly turns to leave, but stops at the door.

ROSE
(turns around angrily)
Where exactly do you go at night?
(beat)
Did you toilet paper the Johnson's house?

DONNIE
(still reading)
I stopped rolling houses in the fifth grade. In sixth grade you start throwing eggs. By eighth grade... the thrill is pretty much gone.
(beat, looking up from his book)
Get out of my room.

ROSE
(bitter)
You know... I don't think that you even live in this house any more. If you could just invite the rest of us over some time.

DONNIE
Get out of my room.

ROSE
Its like there's a light switch that just turns off every time I'm around.

DONNIE
Then why don't you start taking the goddamn pills.

Donnie leans over and turns off his lamp. Rose turns and leaves her son alone in the dark.

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie turns on his lamp and slowly gets out of bed, walking to the bathroom.

INT: UPSTAIRS BATHROOM -- NIGHT

He removes his pills from the medicine cabinet.

He looks at the bottle for a moment, and then takes three pills and swallows them.

TITLE CARD: 02 OCT 1988

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

DONNIE
(mumbling panic)
I don't wanna die... I don't wanna die...

Donnie jerks upright in his bed, awakened from a bad dream. He looks over at his alarm clock. 12:50 AM. His expression is distant.

He goes over to his desk and opens the drawer, removing a black magic marker. Still in his pajamas, he walks downstairs.

INT: DARKO FAMILY ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie passes through the family room, ignoring his FATHER, who is sprawled out in the LA-Z-BOY. The end credits of "SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE" play on the T.V.

Donnie goes out the back-door, shoeless, plodding through the wet grass toward the seventh hole green.

EXT: SEVENTH HOLE -- NIGHT

Thunder rumbles from above.

He arrives next to the pin and stops to look up at the sky. More thunder. The night is serene... eerily calm.

VOICE
(muted, almost electric whisper)
Helluva night for a storm...
Huh Donnie?

Donnie jerks around to see who it is standing behind him.

There... standing on the green is a figure dressed in a GROTESQUE BUNNY SUIT. The mouth is twisted into an unnatural smile with a perverse overbite. His head is misshapen like the SKULL of a DEFORMED CHILD.

He is six-feet tall, wearing a baggy suit of white fur, matted with BLOOD that looks as is it has drained from beneath the costume headpiece.

The large plastic EYES are white without eyeballs. The forehead is DENTED in and the ears flopped forward, damp with mud.

Donnie stares at the BUNNY nervously as a wave of nausea overcomes him.

BUNNY
Tonight is very special, Donnie.

DONNIE
How do you know my name?

BUNNY
I've been watching you.
Do you believe in God, Donnie?

He doesn't answer. He holds his stomach, taking deep breaths.

BUNNY
God loves his children, Donnie.
God loves you.

DONNIE
(frightened)
What do you want?

BUNNY
My name is FRANK.

DONNIE
What do you want, Frank?

FRANK
I want you to trust me, Donnie.

DONNIE
Why should I trust you?

FRANK
Because I saved your life.
(beat)
The world is coming to an end, Donnie.

DONNIE
Why should I care?

FRANK
Because you trust yourself.
(beat)
(MORE)

FRANK (cont'd)
You do trust yourself... don't you Donnie?

Donnie doesn't answer.

FRANK (cont'd)
Look at your watch, Donnie.

He looks down at his watch, noting the time.

FRANK (cont'd)
You're living on borrowed time now.
(beat)
28 days... 5 hours... 42 minutes... 12 seconds.

Donnie looks back at Frank. His expression is a vacant expanse of confusion.

INT: DARKO FAMILY ROOM -- NIGHT

Eddie Darko sleeps reclined in the LA-Z-BOY.

The final notes of the CHANNEL 12 "NATIONAL ANTHEM" fade away.

Several strobes of static interference pass across the screen.

From above... A THUNDEROUS CRASH.

Eddie jerks awake from deep sleep and looks up at the ceiling.

From ABOVE, Samantha Darko begins to SCREAM.

EXT: SEVENTH HOLE -- EARLY MORNING

Donnie is curled up, asleep on the green. A golf ball lands on the green and rolls within inches of his head.

A golf cart filled with four older men arrives. MR. PAULSON (Age 55) gets out first.

MR. PAULSON
Get off the green, asshole!

Mr. Paulson approaches Donnie with his weapon of choice, a three iron, drawn over his shoulder.

MR. PAULSON (cont'd)
Donnie Darko?
(putting his hand on his forehead)
Son? What's going on here?

DR. FISHER, the man riding shotgun, gets out of the cart.

DR. FISHER
Who is it, Don?

MR. PAULSON
It's the kid from the pro shop.

Donnie gets up and brushes himself off. On his arm he sees something written in black magic marker.

Numbers.

28:05:42:12

DR. FISHER
Can we give you a ride home or something?

Donnie stares at the numbers on his arm, confused.

MR. PAULSON
Is this your watch?

Another man, JIM CUNNINGAM (age 40), walks over from the cart with his putter in hand. He is gangly... and there are about six teeth too many in his plastic perma-tan smile.

MR. PAULSON (cont'd)
(to Jim, kissing his ass)
Sorry about this Jim, just the kid who works at the pro shop.
(back to Donnie)
So let's stay off the greens at night, OK?

Jim Cunningham stares at Donnie with a friendly grin.

DONNIE
Sorry Mr. Paulson. It won't happen again.

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- MORNING

Donnie walks slowly down his street, barefoot.

Ahead of him a large crowd of neighbors has convened in the street.

There are four POLICE CARS, a FIRE ENGINE and two NEWS VANS...all parked in front of his house.

There are people... commotion everywhere.

Construction workers guide a BULLDOZER with a large CRANE around the side of the house.

Donnie walks slowly through the crowd with a vague sense of shock. Neighbors whisper... noticing him pass by.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- MORNING

Donnie enters through the front door where there are several FIREMEN roaming around. Two POLICE OFFICERS are having coffee with Eddie and Rose in the kitchen.

Rose sees Donnie and runs over to him.

ROSE
Oh my God...
(crying, hugging him)
Where did you go... where did you go...

Donnie looks around the house bewildered. All of the commotion has moved in his direction.

POLICE OFFICER
(whispers to another officer)
That's one lucky kid.

A news CAMERA MAN and a beautiful young REPORTER named SUZANNE TODD emerge from downstairs.

She grabs her camera man hurriedly.

SUZANNE
Does he know? Has anyone told him?

ROSE
(to Donnie)
Where did you go?

Two MEN in TRENCHCOATS come through the front door. A police officer directs them to Rose.

One of the men removes a badge from his pocket and holds it up for Rose to see.

MAN
(very serious)
Ms. Darko, my name is BOB GARLAND and this is DAVID COLE. We're with the FAA. If you don't mind we'd like to talk to you and your husband for a few minutes.

DONNIE
What's going on?

ROSE
The FAA?

GARLAND and COLE are joined by several other FAA TECHNICIANS.

Donnie wanders into the center of the family room.

GARLAND
Federal Aviation.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

The TELEVISION shows a news segment from the CHANNEL 12 news:

Suzanne Todd stands in front of the Darko house reporting.

SUZANNE
At approximately 1:15 A.M. Middlesex resident EDWARD DARKO heard a large crashing sound.

EDDIE
Well, I was asleep, and it sounded like the roof of the house had collapsed. My first thought was that a tree from the back yard had fallen.

SUZANNE
But instead of a tree, the source of that crashing sound was, believe it or not, what is thought to be a 1000 pound JET ENGINE.

NEWS HELICOPTER SHOT:

A huge, gaping hole in the roof of the Darko house.

A crane lifts the GIGANTIC charred piece of machinery up through the hole, and it hovers above the house like a MONSTROUS BULLET FROM GOD.

SUZANNE (cont'd)
FAA officials have begun a preliminary investigation into what so far can only be described as a freak accident. So far... no one seems to know where this engine came from.

Suzanne stands in the front yard next to Donnie, who looks dazed.

SUZANNE (cont'd)
But perhaps the most amazing thing about this story is the fact that fourteen year-old Donald Darko, whose bedroom was virtually destroyed, had gotten out of bed just minutes before impact.

She turns to Donnie.

SUZANNE (cont'd)
Do you feel lucky to be alive today?

DONNIE
(long beat)
Uh... I guess so.

SUZANNE
So tell us what made you get out of bed last night?

DONNIE
(long beat)
I had a dream that I died.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

The entire family, with the exception of Donnie, sits around watching the broadcast.

Eddie has a glass of Scotch in his hand. He has had a few.

No one knows what to say. Eddie turns off the TV.

SAMANTHA
Mom, is there any way that we can like, make money from this?

The PHONE immediately starts to ring.

EDDIE
Here we go.

ROSE
(getting up)
Will someone please answer that?

EDDIE
No one answers the phone tonight. Everybody pack your things. We're going to the Holiday Inn.

ELIZABETH
Dad, I have to be at school early tomorrow.

EDDIE
(angry)
Pack up your school things Elizabeth, we're not sleeping in this house tonight.

INT: THE DARKO FORD TAURUS -- EVENING

The family sits silently. Eddie drives.

Henryck Gorecki's "Symphony No. 3" plays softly on the car radio.

SAMANTHA
If it fell from a plane... wouldn't the plane have crashed somewhere near our house?

They all sit silently. No one can respond.

INT: HOLIDAY INN ROOM 614 -- NIGHT

Donnie lays in one bed, watching Johnny Carson.

Elizabeth is spread out on the other bed studying.

Samantha sits on the edge of Elizabeth's bed, holding a stuffed unicorn.

SAMANTHA
Why do I have to sleep with Donnie? He stinks.

DONNIE
When you fall asleep tonight... I'm gonna fart in your face.

SAMANTHA
(walking to the door)
I'm telling mom.

ELIZABETH
Samantha, don't go over there.

INT: HOLIDAY INN ROOM 613 -- NIGHT

Rose and Eddie lay awake in the dark.

ROSE
We'll just take the money out of savings. I don't want to wait a week for the insurance company.

Eddie lays next to her, not responding.

EDDIE
Frankie Feedler.

ROSE
What?

EDDIE
Frankie Feedler. You remember him from high school?

ROSE
(long beat)
Yeah. He was your year.

EDDIE
He's dead. Never made it to the prom.
(beat)
They said Frankie Feedler got his bullet from upstairs. He got his bullet pretty damn early.

Rose lays there silently.

EDDIE (cont'd)
They could of said the same thing about Donnie. Our Donnie.
(beat)
But he dodged it. He dodged his bullet, Rose.

Rose rolls over to embrace her husband.

EDDIE (cont'd)
That's my boy.
(beat)
That's our boy.

Moments later the door to the adjoining room opens. It is Samantha.

SAMANTHA
Mom, Donnie said he's gonna fart in my face.

TITLE CARD: 03 OCT 1988

EXT: THE BUS STOP -- MORNING

Rose drops off Donnie and Samantha at the corner.

Already waiting at the bus stop is JEANIE JAMES (age 11: 6th grade).

Also present is SHERITA CHOUDRAY (age 13: 8th grade). She is very FAT. Bundled up for Mount Everest, her signature accessories are EARMUFFS, worn not to protect her ears from the cold, but from VERBAL ASSAULTS.

JEANIE
Hi Sherita.

SHERITA
Chut up.

Rounding the corner are Donnie's two best friends, SEAN SMITH (age 14: 8th grade) and RONALD FISHER (age 13: 8th grade).

SEAN
(raising his hands in victory)
DARKO CHEATS DEATH! Man... you're famous! I called you, like a jillion times last night!

DONNIE
My dad unplugged the phone.

RONALD
My dad said he found you on the golf course. Are you sleepwalking again?

DONNIE
Sometimes, yeah. I don't wanna talk about it.

SEAN
Now that you're famous, you gotta have a smoke.

Sean hands Donnie a Marlboro Red and he takes it, looking over at Samantha and Jeanie.

DONNIE
If you tell mom and dad...

SAMANTHA
I know... you'll put ARIEL in the garbage disposal.

Sean, Ronald and Donnie light up. Ronald is the most amateur looking.

SEAN
Hey, Sherita... want a cigarette?

SHERITA
Chut up.

RONALD
(mimicking)
Chut up!

DONNIE
Leave her alone, man.

SEAN
Go back to India, bitch!

EXT: MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL -- MORNING

From high above we see a SCHOOL DAY UNFOLDING as hundreds of MONGRELS exit their buses and swarm the ANCIENT BUILDING.

Donnie, Ronald, and Sean bust through the back of the school bus emergency exit.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
"...There would be headlines in the papers. Even the grown-up gangs who ran the betting at all the all-in wrestling and the barrow-boys would hear with respect how Old Misery's house had been destroyed. Driven by the pure, simple and altruistic ambition of fame for the gang, Blackie came back to where T stood in the shadow of Old Misery's wall."

They ROAM the halls in search of their classes, they MARCH in unison with the triumphant ringing.

SWARMS of GIRLS surround Donnie, as he makes his way through the crowd.

FEMALE VOICE (cont'd)
"...it was as though this plan had been with him all his life, pondered through the seasons, now in his fifteenth year crystallized with the pain of puberty."

INT: ENGLISH CLASS -- DAY

The voice belongs to MS. POMEROY (age 42), who rules the classroom with relative ease. She is ECCENTRIC and EXPERIMENTAL.

Donnie sits in the back. He is DAYDREAMING. Other students IGNORE Ms. Pomeroy. A NOTE is being circulated.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
What is Graham Greene trying to communicate in this passage? Why do the children break into Old Misery's house?

BETH FARMER (age 13) raises her hand.

BETH
They wanted to rob him.

MS. POMEROY
(sighs)
If you had actually read the short story... Bethany...
which, at a whopping thirteen pages must have kept you up all night, you would know that the children find a great deal of money hidden in a mattress. But they burn it.

The NOTE lands on Donnie's desk. It reads: CAN I HAVE YOUR AUTOGRAPH?

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
Mr. Darko, perhaps given your recent brush with mass destruction, you can give us your opinion?

DONNIE
(hesitates)
Well... ...they say it right when they are ripping the place to shreds. That like... destruction is a form of creation. So the fact that they burn the money is... ironic.

GRETCHEN ROSS (age 14: 8th grade) stands at the doorway to the classroom. She slowly enters. She is BEAUTIFUL. She is demure, yet unafraid to approach Ms. Pomeroy.

GRETCHEN
Um... I'm new, and I think they put me in the wrong English class.

MS. POMEROY
(beat)
This schedule says Z-. This is H.

GRETCHEN
Yeah... well, it's wrong. They put me in with the morons by mistake.

The others laugh.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
Please introduce yourself.

GRETCHEN
My name is Gretchen Ross... and I'm not a moron.

As she gracefully takes her seat, Donnie can't stop staring at her.

INT: SCHOOL GYMNASIUM -- DAY.

GYM CLASS, led by MS. KITTY FARMER is underway. "LOCOMOTION" blasts from her BOOM BOX.

The entire, miserable class is SQUARE-DANCING.

DONNIE is SPINNING around the gym with his partner and the GYMNASIUM begins to TWIST INTO BRIGHT DISTORTION.

Suddenly NAUSEOUS, Donnie abandons his partner, and walks toward the locker room.

INT: LOCKER ROOM -- DAY.

Donnie staggers over to the SINK and turns on the water. He takes several deep breaths.

From the TOILET STALL next to him, Donnie hears MUFFLED SQUEALS OF TERROR followed by REPEATED FLUSHES.

After several more moments of flushing, SETH DEVLIN (age 18: 8th grade) emerges from the stall. His mustache and APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION T-shirt only begin to hint at an IQ that falls well below 80.

SETH
(holding a switchblade)
Say anything and I'll cut you!

Seth stops, gives Donnie a PASSING GLANCE, and then leaves.

Moments later, WUSS #2 emerges from the same STALL.

He is DRENCHED WITH WATER and there are CHUNKS of TOILET PAPER in his hair. Donnie hands him a towel.

INT: THE DARKO FORD TAURUS -- SUNSET

Rose drives Donnie down OLD GUN ROAD, a windy backroad that goes toward DOWNTOWN.

ROSE
So how was school today?

DONNIE
I signed twelve autographs.

ROSE
Wow. Can I have one?

DONNIE
It'll cost you.

ROSE
(beat)
So the construction guys are coming tomorrow morning. They say it'll take about a week to fix the roof. Those men from the FAA finally finished their business.

DONNIE
Do they know yet?

ROSE
Know what?

DONNIE
Where it came from.

ROSE
(uncomfortable beat)
No. Apparently they can't tell us what happened.
(beat)
They've asked us not to talk to anyone about it.

Suddenly, Rose slams on the brakes and the STATION WAGON comes to a sudden STOP.

ROSE
Oh, my God. Roberta!

DONNIE
Grandma Death.

Standing in the road directly in front of the station Wagon is ROBERTA SPARROW, (aka GRANDMA DEATH). At the frail age of 101, she is surprisingly mobile.

She wears a long, white housecoat, and her hair is long and white, blowing in the wind.

GRANDMA DEATH lives in a modest brick house that sits back in a HUGE GRASSY FIELD that OVERLOOKS THE ENTIRE TOWN.

Her MAILBOX sits on the edge of OLD GUN ROAD.

Donnie gets out of the car and takes Grandma Death's hand, walking her back toward her mailbox. He OPENS it for her.

DONNIE (cont'd)
No mail today.
(smiles)
Maybe tomorrow.

Grandma Death smiles back at him... and begins to walk slowly back to her house.

She then turns and takes Donnie's hands into her frail grip.

GRANDMA DEATH
(speaking slowly)
Every living creature... on this earth...
(beat)
must die alone.

Donnie stands there silently for a moment, and then Grandma Death turns back toward her house.

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

DR. LILIAN THURMAN (age 60) is a beautiful silver-haired woman with a BRITISH ACCENT.

DONNIE
So I guess you could say I've met some new friends.

DR. THURMAN
Are these friends real or imaginary?

DONNIE
(hesitation)
Real.

DR. THURMAN
Which friend would you like to talk about?

DONNIE
(beat)
His name is Frank.

Dr. Thurman writes the name FRANK on her legal pad.

DONNIE (cont'd)
I'd be dead if it weren't for him.

DR. THURMAN
Why would you be dead?

DONNIE
Don't you watch the news?

DR. THURMAN
I try not to.

DONNIE
A jet engine fell on my house... landed on my bed. While I was talking to Frank.

DR. THURMAN
So Frank saved your life.

DONNIE
Yeah... but he also said something else.
(beat)
He said that the world was coming to an end.

DR. THURMAN
Do you think that the world is coming to an end?

DONNIE
(long beat)
No. That's stupid.

INT: FAMILY ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie lies in the couch... fast asleep. His eyes slowly open.

There... standing in the corner of the room in the shadows is FRANK.

FRANK
Wake up, Donnie.

INT: MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL -- NIGHT

In the dark school hallway, barefoot in his pajamas, Donnie rounds the corner with a FLASHLIGHT and an AXE, and walks into the GYMNASIUM. He shines the flashlight high up on the wall where a GIANT BANNER reads: MIDDLESEX MONGRELS. VARSITY BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS 1986-87.

Donnie puts the AXE back over his shoulder and disappears into the locker room.

The smashing of METAL AGAINST METAL echoes through the room.

TITLE CARD: 04 OCT 1988

EXT: THE BUS STOP -- MORNING

The same GROUP stands and waits for the BUS. The guys smoke. Sherita stands alone. Samantha is reading to Jeanie.

SAMANTHA
(reading)
And the prince was led into a world of strange and beautiful magic...

JEANIE
Wow.

Suddenly Donnie grabs the piece of paper from his sister.

DONNIE
(reading out loud)
THE LAST UNICORN! By Samantha Darko!

SAMANTHA
Donnie! Give it back!

He pushes her away.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)
(crying)
You're wrinkling it!

SEAN
Hey... it's 8:45. The bus shoulda been here like twenty minutes ago.

RONALD
Maybe Martha Moo finally went nuts and hi-jacked the bus.

SEAN
(excited)
You know, there's like this rule. We get to go home at 8:55.

RONALD
There's no rule!

SEAN
Fuck yeah there is! If the bus doesn't show up in thirty minutes, you're SUPPOSED to go STRAIGHT home.

Donnie lets his sister take the story back.

DONNIE
Yeah... he's right. Because if we keep waiting some guy in a van might pull up and try to molest us. And then our parents could sue the school board.

Everyone starts to get excited... Looking down the road to see if the BUS is coming.

Sean's watch hits 8:55. No bus.

SEAN
8:55. All right! Everybody goes home.

RONALD
Let's go to Donnie's house. His parents are both at work.

The three guys begin walking.

DONNIE
Come on Sam, you can call Jeanie's mom from home.

The two girls follow them. Sherita stands at the corner.

DONNIE (cont'd)
Hey, Sherita... you should go home.

SEAN
Yeah... if you're still here and the bus comes we'll get in trouble.

SHERITA
Chut up.

SEAN
Hey... porky pig... I hope you get molested!

They all walk away.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- DAY

Sean and Ronald play Nintendo SUPER MARIO BROS. JEANIE is on the phone. She looks very concerned.

RONALD
This level is so wicked.

JEANIE
O.K. Mom... bye.
(to the others)
My mom says they closed school today because it's flooded.

SEAN
Flooded?

RONALD
Awesome!

A terrible expression appears on Donnie's face.

INT: MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL -- MORNING

LEROY, a janitor walks quickly down the hall with PRINCIPAL COLE, two ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS and a POLICE OFFICER. They are ankle deep in water.

LEROY
And on top of that I got twelve classrooms with two inches of water in the east wing, all coming from a busted water main in the boy's locker room.

PRINCIPAL COLE
What else?

LEROY
And I don't know what to say about this. I'll just let you see for yourself.

INT: SCHOOL GYMNASIUM -- MORNING

As they enter the Gym, we see a message SPRAY-PAINTED on the Gym floor in HUGE CHILD-LIKE LETTERS.

PRINCIPAL COLE
Lord Almighty...

It reads: They Made Me dO it.

EXT: MINIT MART PARK -- NOON

Donnie, Sean and Ronald have convened with NINE other EIGHTH GRADERS for a game of TACKLE FOOTBALL.

Several EIGHTH GRADE GIRLS ride bikes over to MINIT MART, which is across the street from the football field.

GRETCHEN is among them.

Donnie's team huddles for the next play.

Donnie takes the ball back to pass and LAUNCHES one deep to Ronald in the end zone. He is wide open. It's a perfect pass. But he DROPS it.

RONALD
Shit!

SEAN
You suck!

An '85 CHEVY CAMARO pulls up into the park, GUNS N' ROSES can be heard blasting from inside.

RONALD
Aw shit. How'd they find out we were playing ball today?

Everyone turns and looks as SETH DEVLIN (the kid from the bathroom) and RICKY DANFORTH (8th grade: age 18) emerge from the car.

Ricky is also a six-foot mutant with BAD FACIAL HAIR.

RICKY
Hey... we wanna play some football.

DONNIE
Separate teams.

RICKY
(looking at Seth for approval)
Yeah... O.K.

EXT: MINIT MART PARKING LOT -- DAY

BETH, SUZY (8th grade: age 14) and GRETCHEN are eating yogurt. Gretchen watches the game.

BETH
I overheard my mom say that the boys locker room looked like a swimming pool... and that they found feces everywhere.

SUZY
What are feces?

BETH
Baby mice.

SUZY
Awwwwwww.

Gretchen rolls her eyes.

EXT: FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

Donnie hands the BALL to Ricky and he RUNS for a touchdown knocking four other kids VIOLENTLY to the ground on his way. SETH stands at CENTER facing Donnie.

This is a slaughterhouse.

On the next play, Donnie goes back for SHOTGUN, and while he looks for an opening, Seth KNOCKS him to the ground.

SHAKEN, Donnie stands up and faces SETH.

DONNIE
(angry)
We said no blitz until the count of FIVE!

SETH
Pussy.

Ignoring the four inch difference in height, Donnie PUSHES him.

Seth looks shocked at first, then livid.

SETH (cont'd)
Mistake.

He throws Donnie to the ground and begins to WAIL into him with a SERIES of PUNCHES TO THE FACE.

The other kids crowd around in shock, afraid to jump in.

Donnie tries to defend himself but Seth easily overpowers him.

RICKY approaches the group.

RICKY
Everybody get the fuck outta here!

The other kids meander away. Sean lingers behind, wanting to help, but obviously afraid of getting BLUDGEONED.

SEAN
I'll call you tonight Donnie.

He runs over to his bike and rides off with the others.

Seth pulls out his SWITCHBLADE and holds it inches above Donnie's face, his 80 IQ GRIN AT FULL CAPACITY.

SETH
I could cut your eyes out.

In the background Ricky watches INDIFFERENTLY. He removes a vial of COCAINE from his pocket and takes a snort.

Donnie watches from below, BLOOD draining from his NOSE and MOUTH.

Seth and Ricky get up and walk over to the Camaro. AXL ROSE blares again as they drive off.

Donnie lays on the field ALONE for a few moments, and then slowly gets to his feet.

He reaches into his pocket and removes his prescription pills and takes TWO.

He turns his head toward the sidewalk and he sees GRETCHEN riding SLOWLY by on her bike.

They share a MOMENT of EYE CONTACT.

Gretchen stops and gets off her bike, walking over to him.

GRETCHEN
Some friends you've got, huh?

DONNIE
They're O.K.

GRETCHEN
(removing a handkerchief)
Here, let me clean you up a little.

She wipes blood from his chin. She then squeezes his nose between her fingers.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
Does this hurt?

DONNIE
(wincing)
A little.

EXT: SARASOTA LAKE -- DAY

Donnie and Gretchen walk along the edge of the grass embankment by the water.

DONNIE
So why did you move here?

GRETCHEN
My parents got divorced. My mom has a restraining order against my dad.

DONNIE
Why?

GRETCHEN
He stabbed her.

DONNIE
Did he go to jail?

GRETCHEN
For like... two days. The cops never found the knife.

DONNIE
I was in jail once. Well... not real jail. Kid jail. That's part of the reason why we moved here.

GRETCHEN
You don't look like a jail person.

DONNIE
What does a jail person look like?

GRETCHEN
Like the kid who gave you that bloody nose.

They walk silently for a moment.

GRETCHEN
So what did you do?

DONNIE
I accidently burned down this house. It was abandoned... but the cops were still pretty pissed off.

GRETCHEN
So if not a pyromaniac... what do you want to be when you grow up?

DONNIE
I think I want to be a painter. Or maybe a writer. Maybe I'll write a book and then draw the illustrations. Then people will understand me better.

GRETCHEN
Donnie Darko... I'd read his books.

DONNIE
What about you?

GRETCHEN
I want to be an inventor.

DONNIE
What do you want to invent?

GRETCHEN
A perpetual motion machine.

DONNIE
That's impossible.

GRETCHEN
Nothing is impossible.

DONNIE
(smiling)
Fine. I look forward to seeing it then.

GRETCHEN
For Physics we have to write a paper about the greatest invention of mankind.

DONNIE
We can only pick one?

GRETCHEN
Yeah... but it's obvious to me which one to choose.

DONNIE
(beat)
Fire.

GRETCHEN
That's not an invention. Fire has always been there. We just had to find it.

DONNIE
The wheel.

GRETCHEN
No.

DONNIE
Television.

GRETCHEN
Not bad, but wrong again.

DONNIE
What then?

GRETCHEN
Antiseptics.

DONNIE
You mean soap?

GRETCHEN
Joseph Lister... 1895. Before soap there was no sanitation, especially in medicine. Disease spread quite rapidly. Without soap... you an I would never live to see the year 2000.

DONNIE
We'll be 25 then.

GRETCHEN
And soap will still be the same. It's the only thing on earth than can never be dirty. No matter what crap you throw on it... it always rubs off. And there it is again... perfect.
(wiping his chin)

DONNIE
Until it withers away.

She stares at him for a moment.

GRETCHEN
It's a good thing the school was flooded today.

DONNIE
Why is that?

GRETCHEN
We never would have had this conversation.

DONNIE
Will you go with me?

GRETCHEN
Where are we going?

DONNIE
No... I mean will you GO OUT with me. That's like... what they call it here. Going together.

GRETCHEN
(beat)
Sure.

She gets up and begins to walk up the hill.

DONNIE
Where are you going?

GRETCHEN
I'm going home.

TITLE CARD: 06 OCT 1988

INT: THE DARKO VOLVO -- NIGHT

Eddie Darko drives with Donnie in the passenger seat.

EDDIE
So who is this punk who popped your lip open the other day?

DONNIE
Seth Devlin. It's no big deal.

EDDIE
I understand he's eighteen? And still in the eighth grade.
(shaking his head)
Jesus Christ.

DONNIE
He kills squirrels with his lawnmower.

EDDIE
What?
(angry)
Stay the hell away from that kid.

DONNIE
He's in two of my classes dad.

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

DR. THURMAN
We are going to try something new this time Donnie. Have you ever been hypnotized?

DONNIE
No.

DR. THURMAN
Would you mind if I hypnotized you?

DONNIE
No.
(smiling)
I just doubt you'll be able to. I don't believe in that crap.

CUT TO:

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

Dr. Thurman sits next to Donnie. His eyes are closed.

DR. THURMAN
And when I clap my hands twice, you will open your eyes. Do you understand?

DONNIE
Yes.

DR. THURMAN
So tell me about your day Donnie.

DONNIE
I met a girl.

DR. THURMAN
What is it that you find intriguing about her?

DONNIE
Everything. I don't know where to... begin.

DR. THURMAN
What is her name?

DONNIE
Gretchen. I don't know her last name... I didn't get that far.
(MORE)

DONNIE (cont'd)
But I'll ask her next time. We're going together now.

DR. THURMAN
Do you think a lot about girls, Donald?

DONNIE
Yes.

DR. THURMAN
How are things going at school?

DONNIE
I think about girls a lot.

DR. THURMAN
I asked you about school, Donald.

DONNIE
I think about... fucking a lot during school.

DR. THURMAN
What else do you think about during school.

DONNIE
I think... about... WHO'S THE BOSS.

DR. THURMAN
Who is the boss?

DONNIE
I just turn down the volume and think about fucking Alyssa Milano.

She writes on her pad: ALYSSA MILANO?

DR. THURMAN
What about your FAMILY, Donald?

DONNIE
No... I don't think about fucking my family. That's sick.

DR. THURMAN
Donnie... I want to hear about your friend FRANK.

Donnie is now UNDOING his BELT.

Donnie is no longer paying attention.

Dr. Thurman quickly CLAPS HER HANDS.

Donnie jolts awake... disoriented.

TITLE CARD: 07 OCT 1988

INT: ENGLISH CLASS -- DAY

MS. POMEROY
Visiting us today is Principal Cole and officer Marsh of the Middlesex County police department. They will be asking each one of you to come up to the chalkboard and write this phrase...

Written on the BLACKBOARD is the phrase "THEY MADE ME DO IT", followed by numbers 1-28.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
Please write in your normal handwriting. No cursive.
(nods to principal Cole)

PRINCIPAL COLE
Aaron Armitige.

AARON ARMITIGE walks up to the board and writes the sentence across the board. Chicken scratches.

THEY MADE ME DO IT.

PRINCIPAL COLE (cont'd)
Sherita Choudray.

SHERITA, still wearing her earmuffs, WADDLES up to the board with a scowl on her face and writes the sentence. Her PENMANSHIP IS FLAWLESS.

THEY MADE ME DO IT.

Donnie's face has gone white.

PRINCIPAL COLE
Donald Darko.

Donnie gets up and walks over to the board and writes the phrase.

THEY MADE ME DO IT.

He then sits down again without hesitation.

Officer Marsh hesitates for a moment, lingering over Donnie's penmanship.

He then places an ? next to Donnie's name on the roster.

INT: GYMNASIUM -- AFTERNOON

The floor of the gym has been sandblasted.

Donnie's HEALTH/P.E. class is assembled in uniform rows in front of a TELEVISION CART. MS. FARMER paces in front of them.

MS. FARMER
Today we are starting a new six-week curriculum.
(beat)
This program has changed my life. I suggest you pay close attention. It could very well change yours. If I find you sleeping you will get a ZERO for the day.

Ms. Farmer hits PLAY on the VCR.

ON THE TELEVISION:

A Cloud Formation BLOWS ACROSS THE SCREEN revealing a LOGO that reads: CUNNING VISION PRODUCTIONS.

A series of interviews follow... Infomercial Style.

FAT WOMAN
And what I realized was that for my entire life I was a victim of my own FEAR. I was FEEDING FEAR WITH FOOD!

MAN
(almost crying)
...and I looked at my boss in the eye and I said... I am not your ANGER PRISONER any more!

TEENAGE GIRL
(cheerleader type)
...and finally... I looked in the mirror. Not just IN THE MIRROR. I looked THROUGH the mirror. And in that image I saw my EGO REFLECTION.

MOTHER
(arm around geeky teenage son)
...and for two years I thought it was NORMAL for a fifteen year-old to wet the bed.

LAUGHTER from the students.

MS. FARMER
QUIET!

MOTHER
We tried everything. But the solution was there... all along.

SON
(bursts out emotionally)
...I'm not AFRAID anymore!

A montage of "family" imagery follows.

NARRATOR
All across America... people have come together to join hands. People who believe that human life is too important... too valuable to be controlled by FEAR.

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN walks out onto a COUNTRY PATIO. It is JIM CUNNINGHAM.

NARRATOR (cont'd)
Hello. My name is Jim Cunningham. And welcome to CONTROLLING FEAR.

The title CONTROLLING FEAR appears on the screen... Followed by PART ONE: ATTITUDINAL BELIEFS.

Donnie stares at the screen... recognizing JIM CUNNINGHAM... the PERMA-TAN creep from the COUNTRY CLUB.

EXT: OLD GUN RUINS -- AFTERNOON

The RUINS of a BRICK CHIMNEY sit in the middle of a FIELD. Donnie, Sean and Ronald have lined up several EMPTY BEER BOTTLES, CANS and STUFFED ANIMALS on the HEARTH.

They take turns BLASTING these TARGETS with a B.B. GUN.

BLAM! A bottle shatters.

BLAM! A can falls over. Ronald hands the gun to Donnie. Sean pulls out a bottle of RASPBERRY NIGHT TRAIN and takes a sip.

He hands the bottle to Ronald.

RONALD
What's this shit?

SEAN
Night Train. Swiped it from Minit Mart.

He takes a big sip... which results in a DRY HEAVE.

RONALD
What is that... grape?

SEAN
Raspberry. That's good shit.

DONNIE
(aiming the gun)
Check this out. Smurfette... right between the eyes.

Donnie aims the CROSSHAIRS on SMURFETTE'S HEAD.

He pulls the TRIGGER. Smurfette's HEAD EXPLODES.

SEAN
Wicked!

RONALD
No more fuckin' for her.

SEAN
Smurfette doesn't fuck.

RONALD
Bullshit. Smurfette fucks all the other smurfs. That's why PAPA SMURF made her... 'cause the other smurfs were getting too horny.

SEAN
Not VANITY. He's a homo.

BLAM! A bottle shatters.

RONALD
Then she fucks 'em all while Vanity watches. And Papa Smurf FILMS it.

SEAN
What about SCRAPPY smurf... that lil' SMURFLING. She's female.

RONALD
Naw. She's too young. Besides... why fuck a smurfling when you've got Smurfette! She was built for it man!

Ronald takes another sip of Night Train... followed by another DRY HEAVE.

BLAM! A bottle breaks.

DONNIE
You guys have got it all wrong. First of all... Papa Smurf didn't create Smurfette. GARGAMEL did.
(MORE)

DONNIE (cont'd)
She was sent in as Gargamel's evil spy with the intention of destroying the smurf village. But the overwhelming Goodness of the Smurf Way of Life transformed her into the Smurfette we all know and love. And as for the whole gang-bang scenario... it just couldn't happen. Smurfs are ASEXUAL. They probably don't even have reproductive organs down there under those little white pants. The only reason they exist is because of magic spells and witch-craft... which is all a bunch of bullshit if you ask me.
(beat)
That's what's so illogical about the smurfs... what's the point of living if you don't even have a dick?

Donnie aims the gun... pulls the trigger.

BLAM! A bottle breaks.

SEAN
Dammit Donnie! Why do you always gotta get all smart on us!

RONALD
Naw. Donnie's right.

SEAN
Shut up! What do you know anyway... you've never fucked a girl.

Donnie takes the bottle of Night Train and takes a small sip.

RONALD
I dry fucked once.

Their conversation is INTERRUPTED by the SQUEALING of TIRES.

Down the hill a DODGE MINIVAN is stopped on OLD GUN ROAD. GRANDMA DEATH is once again in the middle of the street.

DONNIE
Grandma Death.

MS. FARMER leans her head out of the window. In the back are SAMANTHA DARKO, JEANIE JAMES, BETH FARMER and two other SIXTH GRADERS.

MS. FARMER
Get out of the road!

Grandma Death doesn't hear her. She wanders around in circles.

Furious, Ms. Farmer gets out of the car and walks over to the old woman, walking her by the shoulders back to her driveway.

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
(impatient)
Please stay out of the road Ms. Sparrow. If this happens again I'm going to call social services.

Samantha and Jeanie get out of the Minivan to check things out. They are wearing MATCHING DANCE WEAR.

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
Get back in the car! We're already late for rehearsal.

SEAN
There's your sister, Donnie.

Ms. Farmer gets back behind the wheel and they drive off.

Grandma Death lurks around her MAILBOX.

RONALD
How old is Grandma Death?

DONNIE
101... I think. Every day she does the same thing. She looks in her mailbox over and over. But there's never any mail. It's always empty.

Grandma Death approaches the mailbox.

SEAN
Here we go... this could be it.

She opens it... then closes it. Walks away.

SEAN (cont'd)
Awwwwwww. That sucks.

Grandma Death approaches the mailbox again.

SEAN (cont'd)
Oh wait... maybe she missed something. Here we go.

Opens it... then closes it. Walks away.

SEAN (cont'd)
Awwwwwww. No dice grandma.

She approaches the box again...

SEAN (cont'd)
Wait a minute... we may STILL have mail...

Opens it... closes it. Walks away.

SEAN (cont'd)
Noooooooo!

They continue to watch her, sipping Night Train into the sunset, as Grandma Death repeats this act like an ancient wind-up doll.

TITLE CARD: 09 OCT 1988

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

ROSE rushes down the family room hallway.

ROSE
Donnie?

Donnie lays on the couch watching television. Elizabeth and her friend KRISTEN have papers spread on the kitchen table STUDYING.

Several CONSTRUCTION WORKERS are packing up their things.

ROSE (cont'd)
Your father and I are going to an emergency PTA meeting. There's leftover lasagna in the refrigerator.

DONNIE
Sure.

His eyes are nervous.

Rose then drags EDDIE out the front door.

The parents are gone... the room relaxes.

Samantha does BACK FLIPS down the hall.

DONNIE (cont'd)
Don't do that shit in the house!

SAMANTHA
Don't say SHIT!

Samantha pouts off to her room.

INT: UPSTAIRS BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Looking nauseous, Donnie opens the medicine cabinet and retrieves his pills.

He takes four of them.

Donnie takes a drink of water, closing his eyes.

He puts the pills back and closes the cabinet.

Suddenly, in the MIRROR, FRANK is standing behind him.

Donnie jumps.

FRANK
You got away with it.

DONNIE
How do you know?

FRANK
The emergency PTA meeting. That's why they called it.

DONNIE
They tried to match the handwriting.

FRANK
But you fooled them. Quite the artist.

DONNIE
You're just a figment of my imagination.

FRANK
If you can see me... then I have to be real.

DONNIE
Then if you're real... close that door.

FRANK
There are laws. My range of movement is limited. Physics apply differently to me.

DONNIE
Your feet touch the floor. If your feet can touch the bathroom floor... why can't you touch the door-knob with your hand?

FRANK
My feet are anchored by an isolated gravitational field. It exists within a defined cubic space.

DONNIE
So you're trapped inside an invisible box.

Donnie reaches his hand out toward Frank and it presses against AN INVISIBLE WALL OF NOTHING... as if he were pressing his hand against glass.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

SAMANTHA comes out of her bedroom and walks slowly down the hallway toward the bathroom.

INT: UPSTAIRS BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie has both hands pressed up against Frank's WALL.

DONNIE
Can anyone else see or hear you but me?

FRANK
No.

DONNIE
How is that possible?

FRANK
The wavelength and frequency of your senses. Every living thing has a separate channel.

DONNIE
Like television... when you get to heaven.

Donnie stares closely into Frank's dead costume eyes.

INT: MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM -- NIGHT

Parents and teachers convene in front of the auditorium entrance. KITTY FARMER hands out XEROXED PAGES OF SOMETHING.

Eddie and Rose chit-chat with other concerned parents.

MS. POMEROY approaches KITTY FARMER.

MS. POMEROY
What are you trying to accomplish here?

MS. FARMER
(angrily)
Go to hell, Barbara.

INT: AUDITORIUM -- NIGHT

PRINCIPAL COLE
Tonight we are here to discuss the recent act of vandalism that resulted in the flooding of several classrooms in the east wing.

(MORE)

PRINCIPAL COLE (cont'd)
The flooding resulted from a broken pipe located in the boys locker room adjacent to the gymnasium. In cooperation with the county police we have begun an active investigation into the cause of this flooding... and our suspects include several of our own students.

Kitty Farmer stands up in her seat near the front row.

MS. FARMER
I want to know why this FILTH is being taught to our children.

The crowd stirs.

PRINCIPAL COLE
Ms. Farmer I would appreciate... if you would wait...

MS. FARMER
Mr. Cole... not only am I a TEACHER... but I am also a PARENT of a Middlesex child. Therefore I am the ONLY person here with the authority to speak on behalf of the PTA. I am the only member of the PTA who transcends the parent-teacher bridge.

PRINCIPAL COLE
Ms. Farmer...

MAN
Let her talk!

MS. FARMER
The bottom line... Mr. Cole.. is that there is material being taught to our children that is CAUSE FOR ALARM.

The crowd stirs.

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
I have in my hand Graham Greene's "THE DESTRUCTORS". This short story is part of my daughter's eighth grade English assignment. In this story several ruthless young children destroy an elderly man's house from inside out. They destroy his house without motive, without moral consequence. They destroy private property... and they get away with it.

Ms. Pomeroy smiles bitterly.

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
Not only do these young children destroy this house, they FLOOD the house... by breaking through the water main!

GASPS from the crowd.

PRINCIPAL COLE
(trying to calm her)
This meeting of the PTA was called to inform the parents of our ongoing investigation...

MS. FARMER
(enraged)
I AM THE PTA! And I say that this FILTH is directly related to our vandalism.

MR. FARMER (who is about 40 pounds lighter than his wife) grabs her arm.

MR. FARMER
Ease down... honey. Ease down.

APPLAUSE from the crowd.

PRINCIPAL COLE
(getting personal)
Now Kitty... I don't think that this is the time or the place to discuss the students' curriculum.

Another PARENT stands up.

PARENT
I think this garbage should be banned from school property.

Several shouts of approval come from the crowd.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

Donnie continues to converse with Frank.

DONNIE
Why did you make me flood the school?

FRANK
We just want to guide you in the right direction.

DONNIE
Who is... we?

FRANK
You'll know soon enough.

DONNIE
(desperate)
Where do you come from?

FRANK
(beat)
Do you believe in time travel, Donnie?

DONNIE
Time travel?

A moment of silence.

SAMANTHA
Who are you talking to?

Donnie turns to see Samantha standing in the doorway.

Frank is GONE.

INT: AUDITORIUM -- NIGHT

A heated debate from the parents is underway. Frustrated... Rose stands up.

ROSE
Excuse me... but what is the real issue here? We have a possible juvenile delinquent in this school who has committed a crime. The PTA does not legislate... nor does it prosecute criminals. This is a job for the police.

MS. FARMER
The PTA is here to acknowledge that there is PORNOGRAPHY in our school's curriculum.

MS. POMEROY
(standing up, enraged)
My GOD... woman, are you drunk?

ROSE
(to Kitty)
Do you even know who Graham Greene is?

MS. FARMER
I think we've all seen GUNSMOKE.

Ms. Pomeroy lets out an incredulous gasp. Rose is speechless.

PRINCIPAL COLE
(completely ignored)
Now ladies... please.

MS. FARMER
(enraged)
FECES!

Principal Cole is speechless.

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
There was urine and FECES flooded in my office!

MS. POMEROY
Well if you don't sit down and think about what you just said... I'M GONNA GO TAKE A SHIT IN YOUR CAR!

Gasps from the crowd.

Rose can no longer maintain her composure... and bursts out laughing.

EDDIE grabs her and they quickly exit the auditorium.

TITLE CARD: 11 OCT 1988

EXT: WIZARD'S ARCADE -- AFTERNOON

Donnie and Gretchen play a race car driving game called CRUISIN' USA. Donnie drives a souped up PONTIAC TRANS-AM through the GRAND CANYON.

GRETCHEN
So when you sleepwalk... can you remember afterward? Like... do you dream?

DONNIE
No... I don't remember anything. I wake up and I look around. I try to figure out where I am... how I got there. Sometimes my bike is laying there next to me.

GRETCHEN
My dad said never wake a sleepwalker... because they could drop dead.

The TRANS-AM crashes head on into a tree. Game Over.

DONNIE
(beat)
I think that maybe it's like... dreaming... only ten times as powerful. It's like this dream is this force...
(MORE)

DONNIE (cont'd)
that exists in your brain. But sometimes... that force grows bigger... and the dream spreads down into your body. Into your arms and legs... and it sends you someplace.

GRETCHEN
So when you sleepwalk you go somewhere familiar.

DONNIE
No... see that's the catch. Every time I wake up somewhere different. Like once I woke up on the edge of this cliff up on Carpathian ridge.

GRETCHEN
And you'd never been there before.

They sit silently for a moment.

EXT: CARPATHIAN WOODS -- AFTERNOON

They walk home along the path.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
Donnie?

DONNIE
Yeah?

GRETCHEN
Do you believe in God?

DONNIE
What does that have to do with it?

GRETCHEN
Well... maybe God is like... giving you these dream steroids. And when you sleepwalk... that's like God... showing you the way.

They keep walking through the forest.

TITLE CARD: 13 OCT 1988

INT: ART CLASS -- MORNING

Donnie stands in front of an easel with an EMPTY SHEET OF PAPER. MR. FERRELL, the HIPPIE ART INSTRUCTOR walks around the room.

MR. FERRELL
This week our assignment is THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND. What do we see when we close our eyes?

DONNIE
The back of my eyelids.

MR. FERRELL
Then draw me the back of your eyelids!

Donnie stares at the blank sheet of paper.

INT: GYMNASIUM -- AFTERNOON

Ms. Farmer stands next to the TELEVISION where Jim Cunningham narrates the LIFELINE TUTORIAL.

JIM CUNNINGHAM
And so now, let us begin LIFELINE EXERCISE #1.

Ms. Farmer stops the tape and moves to the blackboard. On it she has drawn a HORIZONTAL LINE bookended by the words LOVE and FEAR.

MS. FARMER
As you can see the lifeline is controlled be two polar extremes. FEAR and LOVE. FEAR is BAD. LOVE is GOOD.

SEAN
(to Donnie)
No duh.

MS. FARMER
Excuse me?
(defensive)
"No duh" is a product of fear!

She stares them down for a moment... shaking her head.

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
(handing out cards)
Now on each card is a CHARACTER DILEMMA which applies to the LIFELINE. Please read each character dilemma aloud... and place an X on the lifeline in the appropriate place.

The students read their cards.

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
We'll start in the front.

WUSS #2 stands up an walks over to the blackboard.

WUSS #2
Juanita has an important math test today. She has known about the test for several weeks, but has not studied. In order to keep from failing, Juanita decides that she will cheat on the math test.

Wuss #2 places an X near the FEAR end of the lifeline.

MS. FARMER
Good. Next.

CINDY
Mr. Chang is walking home from the grocery store. He sees a man being mugged at knife point. The assailant flees, and the man collapses to the ground. Mr. Chang drops his groceries and runs to help the man.

Cindy marks an X on the lifeline near LOVE.

MS. FARMER
Good.

Donnie watches as several more students interpret their respective HUMAN DILEMMAS.

Finally... it is his turn.

DONNIE
Ling Ling finds a wallet on the ground filled with money.
She takes the wallet to the address on the driver's license but keeps the money inside the wallet.

Donnie looks at the blackboard.

DONNIE (cont'd)
I'm sorry Ms. Farmer... I just don't get this.

MS. FARMER
(impatient)
Just place an X in the appropriate place on the lifeline.

DONNIE
Well yeah... I guess I don't understand this lifeline. I mean... are you saying that all of life's choices are motivated by love or fear?

MS. FARMER
The lifeline is divided that way.

DONNIE
Well I just don't think it's that simple. I mean... so Ling Ling keeps the cash and returns the wallet. Big deal. She certainly doesn't love the owner. And what does she have to be afraid of?

MS. FARMER
(impatient)
Fear and love are the deepest of human emotions.

DONNIE
Well yeah... OK. But how many times during the day, or in like... your entire life are you really truly afraid... or really truly in love? I mean... I love my family... and I'm afraid of dying... but I don't see how any of this crap applies to my everyday life.
They're just lumping like... the whole spectrum of human emotion into these two categories. Like good versus evil.

Ms. Farmer stares at Donnie vehemently. She can't believe what she's hearing.

DONNIE (cont'd)
I just don't think that people... are that simple.

MS. FARMER
(not knowing how to argue with him)
If you don't complete the assignment you'll get a zero for the day.

Donnie thinks for a moment.

DONNIE
(handing her the card)
You can take this card and shove it up your ass, Ms. Farmer.

INT: PRINCIPAL COLE'S OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

Donnie and his PARENTS sit in front of Principal Cole.

PRINCIPAL COLE
Donald... let me preface this by saying that your Iowa test scores are...
(looking down at his file)
(MORE)

PRINCIPAL COLE (cont'd)
...intimidating.
(rubbing his temples)
So... let's go over this again. What exactly did you say?

DONNIE
(long beat)
Well... I asked her to... forcibly insert an object into her rectal cavity.

Silence. Rose looks down, furious.

Eddie lets out a SNORT LAUGH which he tries to conceal with a COUGH. It doesn't work.

INT: SCHOOL HALLWAY -- AFTERNOON

Rose approaches Kitty, who looks visibly shaken. Eddie stands in the background, looking impatiently at his watch.

ROSE
(sincere)
Kitty... I don't know what to say. They've... suspended him for two days.
(beat)
I honestly don't know what has been wrong with him lately. And I can't imagine what was going through his head for him to insult you...

MS. FARMER
(cutting her off)
Rose, I'll tell you this because our daughters have been on dance team together for two years and I respect you as a WOMAN. But after witnessing your son's behavior today I have... significant doubts about your abilities as a MOTHER. I urge you to go home and look in the mirror and pray that your son takes the path of righteousness and that he not succumb to the path of FEAR.

After giving them a fake smile, Kitty Farmer turns and walks away.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

Donnie walks upstairs, passing by Elizabeth's room.

ELIZABETH
(into the phone)
Oh my God, remember that gym teacher Ms. Farmer?
(beat)
Yeah.

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
Well I guess my brother called her a fat bitch today in class and got suspended.

Donnie walks into his room again for the first time since the accident, looking around at the new furniture, paint and carpet.

There is a new computer... everything is perfect.

INT: MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Eddie and Rose get ready for bed.

ROSE
Well we have to punish him somehow.

EDDIE
Oh I say we buy him a moped.

ROSE
(angry)
Eddie...

EDDIE
(defensive)
Oh come on. She's a gym teacher.

Donnie stands in their doorway.

DONNIE
(feeling guilty)
You guys didn't need to buy me all that new stuff for my room.

Neither of them knows how to respond.

They just stare at him... uncomfortably.

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie lays in bed... looking up at the ceiling.

He then rolls over and looks at the Ansel Adams calendar on his wall. The days of the month of OCTOBER are marked off with an X in each square. Tacked onto the calendar is a drawing of Frank.

TITLE CARD: 14 OCT 1988

INT: MIDDLESEX PUBLIC LIBRARY -- NOON

Donnie enters the ANCIENT, CAVERNOUS BUILDING.

He approaches the Computer Circulation Desk, A MODERN anomaly among the rest of the building.

Donnie begins the SUBJECT SEARCH PROGRAM.

He begins typing.

D-E-M-O-N-I-C P-O-S-S-E-S-I-O-N

Print. Thinking...

W-A-V-E-L-E-N-G-T-H

Print.

F-R-E-Q-U-E-N-C-Y

Print. Thinking...

T-I-M-E T-R-A-V-E-L

Print.

INT: LIBRARY CIRCULATION DESK -- AFTERNOON

Donnie checks out several books.

The elderly LIBRARIAN gives him a suspicious look.

LIBRARIAN
Shouldn't you be in school?

DONNIE
I was suspended.

LIBRARIAN
(condescending)
Suspended. May I ask why?

DONNIE
(long beat)
I went way back into the book stacks of my school library. And well...
(leaning in to whisper)
...I took a dump.

The woman's expression moves from CONDESCENSION to SHOCK... DISGUST... and finally HORROR.

Donnie smiles back at her.

INT: LIBRARY READING ROOM -- EVENING

Donnie leafs through several books...

The librarian walks by with her cart. She pauses... sniffing the air... then keeps going.

Donnie looks again through the printout highlighting books of interest.

He stops at one of the titles... and his eyes WIDEN.

"The Philosophy of Time Travel." Sparrow, Roberta N. Dolman Craig: Washington D.C., 1958.

DONNIE
Grandma Death.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- NIGHT

Donnie sits at dinner with his family.

ELIZABETH
What were you doing at the library?

DONNIE
(excited)
I found this book.

He pulls out an old battered hardback.

DONNIE (cont'd)
It's called "The Philosophy of Time Travel."

ELIZABETH
What does time travel has to do with philosophy?

DONNIE
Guess who wrote it?

No one seems to know.

DONNIE (cont'd)
Grandma Death.

ROSE
You mean Ms. Sparrow.

EDDIE
Grandma Death?

ROSE
(to Eddie)
You know... Roberta Sparrow. She lives out on Old Gun road. She's got to be...

DONNIE
101.

ROSE
...extremely fit for her age. Anyway I almost hit her with the car the other day.
(MORE)

ROSE (cont'd)
(to Donnie)
That's a terrible nickname.

DONNIE
(handing her the book)
Look at the inside. About the Author. Roberta N. Sparrow. It was published in 1958.

ROSE
(reading)
Roberta N. Sparrow is the author of several philosophical journals... She lives alone in Virginia.

DONNIE
It has to be her.

ROSE
I doubt that this is the same woman.

EDDIE
Actually I've heard of her. Your grandpa used to talk about her.
(beat)
She was a nun for many, many years. And then one day, I think when she was already well into her thirties... she just up and left the church.

SAMANTHA
Did she get suspended like Donnie?

EDDIE
No honey. Nuns take a lifetime vow to the church, and for some reason she quit. She would never say why.
(beat)
People who knew her after that said that from talking to her you would never have known that she had ever been a nun. It was as if overnight she had become this... entirely different person.
(beat)
No one in her family knew what to make of it. They were very wealthy. The Sparrows were famous for their gem collections. So over the years... as she got older she became more and more of a recluse. They said she avoids ALL human contact. She's been living in that old house for as long as I can remember.

Donnie takes his book back from his mother. Anxious to read it. Eddie seems lost in his own story.

EDDIE (cont'd)
I guess she just lost faith in the world.

TITLE CARD: 16 OCT 1988

EXT: THE DARKO BACKYARD -- DAY

[IN SLOW MOTION]

Donnie and Gretchen jump up and down on the TRAMPOLINE, lost among falling autumn leaves.

TITLE CARD: 17 OCT 1988

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

[This scene begins over the PREVIOUS IMAGE].

Donnie is back on Dr. Thurman's couch.

DONNIE
So this woman... Grandma Death. I think that Frank wants me to go talk to her. I mean... he asked me if I believed in time travel. And she wrote this book about it. That can't be just a random coincidence.
(beat)
And there was something else she said.

DR. THURMAN
What was that?

DONNIE
She said... every living creature on earth must die alone.
(beat)
It just reminded me of my dog Franklin.

DR. THURMAN
Is Franklin still with us?

DONNIE
No. He died. We couldn't find him for two days.
(beat)
Because he went and crawled underneath our back porch. He went to be alone.

DR. THURMAN
How often do you see Frank?

DONNIE
Four times... so far.

DR. THURMAN
Can anyone else see him?

DONNIE
I don't think so. It's like... they're tuned in to my T.V. station... and no one else's.

DR. THURMAN
Who is THEY?

DONNIE
I don't know. I mean... my girlfriend...

DR. THURMAN
Your girlfriend?

DONNIE
Well she has this theory. But I don't believe it.

DR. THURMAN
What theory is that?

DONNIE
Well... she calls them dream steroids.

DR. THURMAN
And who is injecting you with these dream steroids?

DONNIE
Well that's the thing... it's stupid...

DR. THURMAN
You're holding back...

DONNIE
(cutting her off)
God.

DR. THURMAN
Excuse me?

DONNIE
God.
(beat)
I think that Frank... could be a sign from God.

Donnie laughs nervously.

DR. THURMAN
The result of God's dream steroids.
(long beat)
Now why is that such a ridiculous idea?

DONNIE
Because... I don't believe in God.
(beat)
I mean... I'd like to believe that there was a God... but I've just never seen any proof. So I just choose not to bother with it. It's like I could spend my whole life thinking about it... debating it in my head. Weighing the pros and cons. And in the end I still wouldn't have any proof. So... I don't even debate it anymore. Because it's absurd.

DR. THURMAN
The search for God is absurd.

DONNIE
I guess so.
(beat)
So does that make me like... an atheist?

DR. THURMAN
No. An atheist is someone who denies altogether the existence of a God. You are an AGNOSTIC. An agnostic is someone who believes that there can be no proof of the existence of God... but does not deny the possibility that God exists.

Donnie takes this in for a moment.

DONNIE
So maybe Frank is the proof...

DR. THURMAN
That God is revealing himself to you?

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

The Darkos have invited DR. FISHER and his WIFE over to watch the REDSKINS GAME. Rose and ANNE sit outside by the pool while Eddie, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, Ronald and Donnie watch the game in the FAMILY ROOM.

EDDIE
Ahhh... We need Theisman.

DR. FISHER
We need a miracle.

EXT: POOL PATIO -- EVENING

Rose and ANNE share a bottle of wine.

ANNE
So I told him. I'll be forty-six next week, and my career means something to me.

ROSE
Well... he just doesn't understand what we'd do if there was no Craft Barn.

ANNE
Amen. Did you watch THIRTYSOMETHING this week?

ROSE
I wouldn't miss it.

Samantha bounces through the patio back inside wearing a DOROTHY OUTFIT from "The Wizard of Oz".

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

Donnie sits back in the LA-Z-Boy, dozing off...

JOHN MADDEN'S CBS CHALKBOARD UNFOLDS on the T.V. SCREEN.

MADDEN traces his ELECTRONIC lines across the screen tracing the movement of the players... as their images are FROZEN IN TIME.

MADDEN
And watch Art Monk cut back...

Donnie's eyes close.

[The following scene unfolds in SLOW MOTION].

Moments later... Donnie's eyes RE-OPEN. The SOUNDS of the TELEVISION and OTHER VOICES fade away into MUFFLED SILENCE.

Donnie turns his head and sees that the ROOM is bathed in ARTIFICIAL WHITE LIGHT streaming through EACH WINDOW... As if God hit the PAUSE BUTTON during a FLASH OF LIGHTNING.

Donnie turns his head and sees that each PERSON in the room has... PROTRUDING from their STOMACH... THICK SPEARS MADE OF SILVERY PLASTIC GEL.

As EDDIE gets up from the couch to walk over to the REFRIGERATOR... his SPEAR PRECEDES HIM... MORPHING INTO AN EXTRUDED ARROW that REACHES THE REFRIGERATOR SEVERAL SECONDS BEFORE HIM.

The SPEAR TRACES THE EXACT GEOGRAPHY of his MOVEMENT THROUGH TIME... using his CENTER OF GRAVITY AS ITS AXIS POINT.

Donnie turns and sees SAMANTHA SKIPPING down the downstairs hall... as her SPEAR BOUNCES SEVERAL FEET IN FRONT OF HER like a CATERPILLAR.

Her SPEAR... SMALLER than her FATHER'S... is proportional to her MASS.

She sings to herself.

SAMANTHA
(her voice echoing through the silence)
Follow the yellow brick road...

Donnie looks down at his STOMACH and sees his own SPEAR PROTRUDING OUTWARD. It then begins to EXTRUDE FORWARD toward the STAIRCASE.

Like a CHILD TRANSFIXED by a FIREFLY... Donnie FOLLOWS THE PATH OF HIS SPEAR UPSTAIRS.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- EVENING

Donnie and his SPEAR round the corner and ARRIVE in his PARENT'S BEDROOM.

INT: MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

His SPEAR leads him to the CLOSET.

He opens the closet door... and the SPEAR leads him down to a BOX hidden beneath his father's shoe rack.

Donnie removes the BOX from the closet and UNLATCHES it.

Inside is a .44 MAGNUM PISTOL.

Donnie removes the pistol from the box.

He stares at it with the same CHILD-LIKE expression.

ROSE
(her voice echoing from downstairs)
Donnie! Dinner's ready!

SUDDENLY... Donnie's universe SNAPS BACK TO NORMAL. The WHITE LIGHT is gone... the SPEAR has vanished.

Donnie still holds the gun.

His expression changes to NERVOUS SHOCK.

After his eyes linger over the gun for a moment, he quickly places it back in the box... and carefully places the box back under the shoe rack.

TITLE CARD: 18 OCT 1988

EXT: THE BUS STOP -- MORNING

The usual Crew is there. Donnie arrives last... by himself. He looks tired and pre-occupied.

SEAN
He's back!

RONALD
Donnie Darko.. back from the dead.

SEAN
How was the vacation?

DONNIE
(beat)
Pretty boring.

INT: ART CLASS -- MORNING

Donnie sits in front of his easel... staring at the empty sheet of paper.

MR. FERRELL
(to Donnie)
Explore the unconscious mind. Open the floodgates.

The empty canvass stares back at him... mocking hi

INT: ENGLISH CLASS -- DAY

Ms. Pomeroy places a large cardboard box on her desk.

MS. POMEROY
Please take out your Graham Greene books and place them in this box. I have just received a memo that instructs me to inform you that this book has been banned from school property. If you are found carrying this book you will be suspended.

Everyone in the class passes their books forward in silence.

Donnie raises his hand.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
Yes?

DONNIE
Are you guys going to burn the books in the teacher's lounge?

Gretchen smiles.

MS. POMEROY
(long, sarcastic beat)
Yes. We will be roasting marshmallows with the books. It gives me no pleasure to take these books from you...
to deny any student the right to read the works of one of the great writers of the twentieth century. But... alas, I have not yet been elected Queen of the Universe. And until that day I am forced to obey the rules... and so are you.
Even if the rules are stupid... you still must obey them or you will be punished. But as with all rules... there are loopholes. No one is telling you not to read Graham Greene at home or at your public library. And as a matter of fact I have already created a loophole for you. Go to Waldenbooks at the mall and you will find that I have pre-ordered several dozen copies.

Donnie smiles.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
Now in Mr. Greene's absence we will be reading another classic that has been approved by the powers that be. Richard Adams' "Watership Down".

She begins to hand out copies of the paperback novel.

Beth Farmer smiles when she sees the cover.

BETH
Awwwww. Bunnies.

INT: SCHOOL BATHROOM -- DAY

Donnie stands at the urinal.

As he zips his pants, a figure approaches from behind, placing a switchblade next to his throat.

It is Seth Devlin.

He pulls Donnie back from the urinal with great force.

SETH
Did you tell them that I flooded the school?

DONNIE
I didn't say shit.

SETH
That's not what I heard. You saw me that day in the locker room. And now they think I did it.

DONNIE
Well if you're innocent then you have nothing to worry about.

SETH
You know what I think?

DONNIE
You think?

SETH
I think that you did it.

Donnie doesn't respond. The tardy bell rings.

DONNIE
If you're gonna slit my throat... then go ahead and do it. Otherwise I'm late for physics.

Seth takes the knife an pokes the TIP softly into the flesh of Donnie's neck.

It punctures his skin, drawing a small amount of blood.

He pushes Donnie away. Donnie touches his neck in shock.

SETH
This ain't over.

INT: PHYSICS CLASS -- DAY

Donnie walks into the classroom and takes his seat next to Gretchen. He is sweating profusely.

DR. MONNITOFF is handing out papers.

At the a head of the class is a large banner that reads: PHYSICS IS PHUN!

DR. MONNITOFF
Today we will be meeting with our partners for the Young Inventors Assignment.

Donnie holds a tissue over the small cut on his neck.

GRETCHEN
What happened to your neck?

DONNIE
(beat)
I cut myself shaving.

GRETCHEN
(long beat)
Give me a break.

DONNIE
I don't want to talk about it.
(changing the subject)
So what are we going to invent?

EXT: SARASOTA DRIVE -- AFTERNOON

Donnie and Gretchen walk down the neighborhood street.

GRETCHEN
Were you ever afraid of the dark when you were a little kid?

DONNIE
No.

GRETCHEN
I'll take that as a yes. Every baby cries because it's afraid of the dark. I mean, can you think of anything worse than being alone in pitch black?

DONNIE
Sometimes... being alone in your room with the lights out is the greatest thing in the world.

GRETCHEN
Yeah... but you always know that in a few hours the sun will come out and it will be light again. A whole new day.

DONNIE
So what's your point?

GRETCHEN
My point is that... like... babies don't really have memories.
(MORE)

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
They start to pick up words here and there, and they start to identify with certain objects, but most people have no memory of the first couple of years of their life.

DONNIE
So what's the point of inventing something for a little baby if they are never going to remember it in the first place?

GRETCHEN
Well just think of all those times when you were a little baby and you cried because you were afraid of the dark. And because you had no memories stored up... for all you knew... every night could last forever. Perpetual darkness.

DONNIE
Like if the sun... just refused to shine.

GRETCHEN
Yeah. And what if you had a time machine... and you could go back in time and take all those hours of pain and replace them... with something better.

DONNIE
Why not just buy your baby a night light?

GRETCHEN
That's not good enough. I mean replace them with whatever images you wanted.

DONNIE
What kind of images?

GRETCHEN
Like... the pictures that you see every once in a while... the sunset in Hawaii ... the Grand Canyon. Things that show us how great the world can be.

Donnie stops and takes Gretchen's hand.

DONNIE
You know... we've been going together for a week and a half...

GRETCHEN
And what?

DONNIE
Well...

GRETCHEN
(beat)
You want to kiss me...

DONNIE
Well... duh.

Donnie goes in for an awkward kiss... but Gretchen turns and denies him.

Donnie turns away... embarrassed.

DONNIE (cont'd)
That's alright... I understand.

GRETCHEN
No... Donnie wait...
I've never kissed a boy before...
(embarrassed)
...and I always wanted it to be at a time when...

DONNIE
When it reminds you how great the world can be.

GRETCHEN
Yeah. And right now we're just standing on the side of this street... walking home from school... and there's some fat guy over there walking his dog.

MR. BEASLEY walks by with his CHIHUAHUA... and waves.

They wave back.

DONNIE
Well... I'll try harder then. I'll do my best... to send one of those moments your way.

INT: SARASOTA CLUB SNACK BAR -- AFTERNOON

Donnie sits behind the counter... doing inventory.

An OLD WOMAN TENNIS PLAYER approaches.

She holds out a wallet.

OLD WOMAN
Excuse me... young man. I found this wallet on the walkway. I think it belongs to that nice man from the television.

DONNIE
(taking the wallet)
Thanks.

Donnie opens the wallet, looking at the I.D.

It reads:

JIM CUNNINGHAM

42 STONEGATE DR.

MIDDLESEX, VA 23189

TITLE CARD: 19 OCT 1988

INT: SARASOTA PUMPKIN PATCH -- EVENING

Neighborhood families mill around the Halloween setup.

Donnie and Elizabeth walk among the masses of Orange.

ELIZABETH
So I hear that you have a girlfriend.

DONNIE
Yeah.

ELIZABETH
What's her name?

DONNIE
Gretchen.

ELIZABETH
Does she wear a lot of makeup?

DONNIE
I don't... think she wears any.

ELIZABETH
Good.

DONNIE
You're not gonna tell mom, are you?

ELIZABETH
(defensive)
Why would I tell mom?

DONNIE
Because you tell mom everything.

ELIZABETH
No I don't.
(long beat)
She worries about you. You know that.

DONNIE
Don't worry... I'm taking my medication.

ELIZABETH
It's not that. I mean this mouthing off to your teachers. I'll admit... when dad told me what you said to Ms. Farmer... I laughed my ass off.

DONNIE
I was just being honest.

ELIZABETH
Yeah... well that's not the way the world works. If you keep being honest the world will eventually find a way to destroy you.

DONNIE
Sorry if I won't get into Harvard...

ELIZABETH
Donnie... I didn't mean it that way.
(shaking her head)
I just wish sometimes that you'd realize how easy you've got it. I study my ass off to get A's in school. And here you come home every day and you throw your backpack on the floor and never look at it. You never lift a finger to study unless it's the bare minimum just to get by... and you still get solid B's It's so easy for you and you don't even care.

Donnie doesn't respond.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
So just stop being honest with other people... and be honest with yourself for once. You've got too much going for you... so don't fuck it up.

Donnie still doesn't respond.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)
OK... So there's my big sister lecture for the month of October.
(changing the subject)
So pick a damn jack-o-lantern already.

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

Rose and Eddie sit in front of Dr. Thurman.

ROSE
Thank you for seeing us at the last minute... we just felt that it was time to discuss...

DR. THURMAN
What I think is wrong about your son.

ROSE
Yes... well when you said to look for signs of aggression... and he was recently suspended from school for insulting his gym teacher. And he was also in a fist fight.

EDDIE
That was self defense.

ROSE
It was a fight. He had a black eye and a bloody nose.
(long beat)
I wash his sheets and... he's been masturbating.

EDDIE
That's NOT a problem.

DR. THURMAN
Ms. Darko... let me be frank with you.

ROSE
Please.

DR. THURMAN
Your son is very troubled. His aggressive behavior seems to stem from his increased detachment from reality. His inability to cope with the forces in the world that he perceives to be threatening. Aggression, by definition is any unprovoked hostile attack... but an unprovoked attack is still, at the subconscious level, a defense mechanism.

EDDIE
(defensive)
I don't remember any fourteen year-old who didn't come home with a black eye every once in a while.

DR. THURMAN
What I am more concerned with is Donald's psychological defense mechanism.

EDDIE
Come again?

DR. THURMAN
Has your son ever told you about Frank?

ROSE
Frank?

DR. THURMAN
Yes. Frank... the giant bunny rabbit?

ROSE
Excuse me?

DR. THURMAN
Donald is experiencing what is commonly called a daylight hallucination.

ROSE
You're telling me that my son has an imaginary friend?

DR. THURMAN
Donald has described lengthy conversations... physical encounters with what I believe to be a manifestation of his subconscious mind. Now... this is a common occurrence among... paranoid schizophrenics.

Rose looks over at Eddie with an expression of panic.

DR. THURMAN (cont'd)
Now it would be presumptuous of me to diagnose your son as schizophrenic, but many of the symptomatic behavioral patterns do exist.

ROSE
(long beat)
I... what can we do?

DR. THURMAN
I would like to put him through more hypnotherapy... and change his medication.

INT: THE DARKO FORD TAURUS -- EVENING

Eddie and Rose sit silently in the car for several moments. It is raining outside.

EDDIE
This is bullshit, Rose.

ROSE
(near tears)
Eddie...

EDDIE
Come on... Donnie is not schizophrenic!

ROSE
(crying)
Our son... is sick! He is sick and he needs help. Somewhere along the line we made too many mistakes... and we have damaged him in some way. And you know what? We can't just go back in time and erase all of the mistakes.

EDDIE
OK... then what's your fucking solution? More drugs?

ROSE
No Eddie... let's buy him a moped.

INT: UPSTAIRS BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie stands in front of the bathroom mirror... catatonic... looking at his reflection.

FRANK stands behind him.

FRANK
Hello Donnie...

Suddenly, Donnie turns around with a BUTCHER KNIFE and lunges at FRANK with all of his weight.

The Knife collides with FRANK'S INVISIBLE FORCE FIELD as if it were STEEL. Donnie lunges repeatedly at Frank with PSYCHOTIC RAGE... but the KNIFE BOUNCES OFF.

Before Donnie can grasp what has happened... FRANK is gone... and he has plunged the knife into the bathroom wall several times.

Samantha... standing in the doorway... sees this.

She begins to cry.

TITLE CARD: 20 OCT 1988

INT: SCHOOL AUDITORIUM -- MORNING

The auditorium is packed with students. The lights dim.

Principal Cole walks out onto the stage.

PRINCIPAL COLE
Good morning. It is my great pleasure to introduce to the students and faculty of Middlesex Middle School, our distinguished guest... Mr. Jim Cunningham.

The audience breaks into thunderous applause.

Jim Cunningham takes the stage. Jogging up to the mike.

JIM CUNNINGHAM
(shouting)
Good morning Mongrels!

AUDIENCE
(scattered voices)
Good morning...

JIM CUNNINGHAM
That's all the gusta you can musta? I said Good Morning!

AUDIENCE
(yelling louder)
Good MORNING!

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Now that's better... but I still sense some students out there... who are AFRAID... just to say GOOD MORNING!

AUDIENCE
(screaming)
GOOD MORNING!

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Are you AFRAID?

AUDIENCE
(screaming louder)
GOOD MORNING!

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Now that's what I like to hear.
(suddenly serious)
Because too many young men and women today are paralyzed by their fears. Students look to their peers for guidance... for acceptance... for affection.

(MORE)

JIM CUNNINGHAM (cont'd)
They give in to their feelings of self doubt... they surrender their bodies to the temptations of drugs, alcohol and premarital sex. But these are empty solutions. These are toxic chemicals... and disease spreading behavior.

A large SCREEN lowers behind him.

JIM CUNNINGHAM (cont'd)
I would like to tell you a story today about a young man whose life was destroyed by the instruments of fear. A young man searching for love... in all the wrong places.
(shaking his head tragically)
His name was Frank.

On the GIANT SCREEN a IMAGE SLIDE appears of a young CARTOON teenager whose EYES are WHACKED OUT on DRUGS.

The title appears: HIS NAME WAS FRANK.

Upon hearing the name FRANK, Donnie falls into a PARANOID TRANCE.

Gretchen, who looks extremely bored, leans over to Donnie.

GRETCHEN
Let's get out of here.

Donnie ignores her. His eyes are locked on Jim Cunningham, who begins his rousing re-enactment of the sad, unfortunate downfall of FRANK.

Within minutes, Jim Cunningham has the crowd laughing... warming to him... his CARTOON SLIDE SHOW... along with his imitations of GIGGLING TEENAGE GIRLS... NAGGING MOMS... DORKY GUYS... and other aspects of FRANK'S LIFE are HILARIOUS.

Donnie listens to Jim Cunningham intently... saying nothing.

When his act is over, the crowd gives him a HUGE round of applause.

The HUGE SCREEN rises upward and Jim Cunningham takes questions from the crowd from portable MIKE STANDS in the back of the auditorium.

Several students get up and go to the Mikes.

DORKY GIRL
Hi. I just wanted to say that I think you're really talented. And... um...
(MORE)

DORKY GIRL (cont'd)
my sister... like I sometimes worry that she eats too much.

YOUNGER OVERWEIGHT GIRL
(mortified, yelling at her sister from the crowd)
Shut up, Kim!

DORKY GIRL
I'm just trying to help you!

JIM CUNNINGHAM
There's no need to be embarrassed. Many times we eat because we are afraid to face the reality of our EGO REFLECTION. We shouldn't just look INTO the mirror. We should look THROUGH the mirror.

DORKY GIRL
Thanks.

Kitty Farmer runs out onto the stage and hands Jim Cunningham a bottle of water and a towel.

She gives him the THUMBS UP sign, and runs back off stage.

LANKY KID
Um... How can I decide what I want to be when I grow up?

JIM CUNNINGHAM
I think that you should look deep within yourself... deep within your heart... and find what it is in the world that makes you feel LOVE. Just pure LOVE. And then go to that. In your studies... in your athletics... go towards love.

LANKY KID
Thank you.

Donnie gets up from his seat and goes to the mike.

WUSS #2
What can I do to learn how to fight?

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Violence is a product of fear. Those who love themselves enough should have no need to fight another person. Learn to truly love yourself... and the world will be yours.

WUSS #2
OK.

Donnie steps up to the mike stand.

DONNIE
How much are they paying you to be here?

JIM CUNNINGHAM
(beat)
Excuse me?

DONNIE
I mean... obviously you're telling us this crap because you want us to buy your book.

Laughter from the students.

JIM CUNNINGHAM
(beat)
I think you're afraid.

DONNIE
Well... I think you're full of it.

More laughter and applause.

There are rumblings from the faculty. Principal Cole gets up... but Jim Cunningham waves him off.

DONNIE (cont'd)
That was like... some of the worst advice that I've ever heard.
(to Dorky girl)
If you want your sister to lose weight... tell her get off the couch, stop eating twinkies... and maybe go out for field hockey.
(to Lanky kid)
If you want to figure out what to be when you grow up... pick the class that you hate the least... and then go to the library and read that career planner book.
(to Wuss #2)
And if you're sick of some jerk shoving your head in a toilet, then go lift some weights... maybe take a karate lesson. And when he tries to do it again... kick him in the balls.

More rumblings from the faculty... laughter and applause from the students.

JIM CUNNINGHAM
I think that you are afraid to ask me for advice. I think that you are a very troubled... confused young man.
(MORE)

JIM CUNNINGHAM (cont'd)
I think you are searching for answers in all the wrong places.
(shaking his head)
Why won't you ask me to help you? Just one thing. Let me help you.

DONNIE
(long beat)
Are you the Antichrist?

The crowd is stirring. More students applaud.

An ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL approaches Donnie and removes him from the auditorium.

INT: SCHOOL HALLWAY -- DAY.

Donnie stands in front of his locker, taking books out.

Gretchen approaches him from behind.

GRETCHEN
Hey what happened... did you get in trouble?

DONNIE
No... they told me to go to study hall... but I'm getting out of here.
(beat)
You wanna come with me?

GRETCHEN
Yeah... let's go.

EXT: MINIT MART PARKING LOT -- DAY

Donnie and Gretchen come out of the store with sandwiches.

GRETCHEN
So what's going on, Donnie?

DONNIE
(beat)
If I told you something... something that you may not want to hear... will you still trust me?

GRETCHEN
Of course I'll still trust you.

DONNIE
(beat)
It's getting worse.

GRETCHEN
You're still sleepwalking?

DONNIE
No... I've been seeing stuff... a lot of really messed up stuff. While I'm still awake. At first it didn't make any sense... but now it's all starting to fit together.

Donnie takes out the book by ROBERTA SPARROW.

GRETCHEN
(taking the book)
The Philosophy of Time Travel. What is this?

DONNIE
We call her Grandma Death.

EXT: OLD GUN ROAD -- DAY

Donnie and Gretchen stand at the end of GRANDMA DEATH'S driveway.

GRETCHEN
So you really think Grandma Death knows something about time travel?

DONNIE
There's stuff in her book that describes this stuff I've been seeing. It can't be a coincidence. It has to be a sign.

GRETCHEN
Well... then we have to ask her.

Gretchen leads Donnie up to the front porch of the decrepit house.

She rings the doorbell.

They wait for several moments... nothing happens.

Gretchen goes and peers through a window.

DONNIE
(eager)
I know she's here. She never leaves the house.

GRETCHEN
How does she eat?

DONNIE
Meals on Wheels.

GRETCHEN
Maybe she's asleep.

DONNIE
Forget it. Let's get out of here.

They walk to the end of the driveway, and Donnie stops at the mailbox.

DONNIE (cont'd)
Wait a second.

He opens the mailbox. Empty.

GRETCHEN
(pointing at the house)
Donnie, look!

In an upstairs window of the house, the silhouette of Grandma Death peers down at them ominously.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
She's watching us.

After a moment's hesitation, Donnie waves at her.

She shuts the curtain abruptly.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
Maybe we should go.

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

DONNIE
It was just like she described them in her book. They looked like they were alive... the way that they moved... they looked like they were made of liquid or something. Liquid spears.

DR. THURMAN
Liquid spears growing out of our stomachs.

DONNIE
And it was bright outside... even though it was night. It was almost like... if during a flash of lightning... God hit the pause button.

DR. THURMAN
Do you believe this to be a sign from God?

DONNIE
(long beat, then distant)
I followed my spear... and I found something...

DR. THURMAN
Where did your spear take you?

DONNIE
(beat, deciding to lie)
Nowhere... it took me to my parents room... there was nothing there.

DR. THURMAN
Have you told Gretchen about the spears?

DONNIE
Yeah... but if I told her about the other stuff... that I have an imaginary friend... I don't think she'd want to be my girlfriend anymore.

DR. THURMAN
Are you embarrassed by these things you see?

DONNIE
(long beat)
You know... every week I come in here and I tell you stuff... and it's all embarrassing. I tell you stuff that I don't tell anyone else... stuff that if my parents ever found out they would... they would probably disown me.

DR. THURMAN
Why is that?

DONNIE
You know what... it's your turn Dr. Thurman. I'm not saying anything else until you tell me something about yourself.

DR. THURMAN
I'm the therapist. I am not the focus...

DONNIE
(cutting her off)
That's bullshit... unless you tell me something really embarrassing about yourself right now... you'll never get another word out of me.

Dr. Thurman is not amused.

Donnie makes a ZIPPER LIP gesture.

DR. THURMAN
(long, stubborn beat)
I once had an extended sexual fantasy involving Mr. Rogers.

There is a long awkward silence between them.

DONNIE
(earnest)
That's OK Dr. Thurman... it's nothing to be embarrassed about. I have sexual thoughts all the time too.

DR. THURMAN
I know.

DONNIE
I mean... my girlfriend... she won't even let me kiss her. She says because it's her first kiss... she's like waiting for this big... moment or something. I just don't get it. I just want to get it over with so we can move on to the good stuff.

DR. THURMAN
The good stuff.

DONNIE
Yeah... you know...
(whispering)
fucking.

DR. THURMAN
(cutting him off)
Have you ever even kissed a girl, Donald?

DONNIE
Well... yeah last summer. But it didn't count.

DR. THURMAN
Why didn't it count?

DONNIE
No tongue. That's not even first base.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

The entire family is having dinner. Donnie is lost in a trance.

ROSE
Donnie... are you still with us?
(beat)
So how was your therapy session tonight?

DONNIE
No so bad. You know... Dr. Thurman isn't so bad a lady. I can tell her anything.

Rose appears surprised and then sad at this comment, she looks at Eddie, who just looks down at his plate of food.

SAMANTHA
Donnie are you coming to my talent show tomorrow?

DONNIE
What talent show?

ROSE
Your sister is dancing in the talent show tomorrow. It starts at five.

ELIZABETH
Yeah Donnie... we're all going. It's going to be cool. That celebrity author guy will be there.

EDDIE
Yeah... Jim Cunningham. I played golf with him last weekend. He just bought a house over on Stonegate.

TITLE CARD: 21 OCT 1988

INT: ENGLISH CLASS -- DAY

MS. POMEROY
What exactly is the relationship between Fiver and Hazel?

The class is silent. Sean raises his hand.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
Yes?

SEAN
What's hraka?

MS. POMEROY
Hraka is rabbit poop.
(the class laughs)
Please refer to the Lapine glossary in the back of the book.
(MORE)

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
In creating the universe of "Watership Down", the author has also created a language for the rabbits.

DONNIE
(to Sean, with a psychotic grin)
Eat hraka and die.

The class laughs again.

MS. POMEROY
Sean, I think that you have an elil.

SEAN
What's an elil?

MS. POMEROY
An elil is an enemy. The enemy of the rabbit.

INT: YOUNG INVENTORS FAIR -- DAY

Donnie and Gretchen are at the front of their class presenting their INVENTION.

DONNIE
So we call them... IMGs

GRETCHEN
Infant Memory Generators.

DONNIE
Yeah. So the idea is that... you buy these glasses for your infant, and they wear them at night when they sleep.

GRETCHEN
And inside the glasses are these slide photographs. And each photograph is of something peaceful... or beautiful.

DONNIE
Whatever pictures the parents want to put inside.

DR. MONNITOFF
What effect do you think this would have on an infant?

DONNIE
Well... the thing is, nobody remembers their infancy.

GRETCHEN
And anyone who says they do is lying.

DONNIE
Yeah... totally. And if you could go back to every night when you were a baby alone in the dark... and replace those nights with these pictures...

GRETCHEN
Pictures that show why life is worth living.

DONNIE
That the babies would develop memory earlier in life.

DR. MONNITOFF
Did you stop and think that maybe infants need darkness? That darkness is part of their natural development?

DONNIE
(beat)
Who needs darkness?

GRETCHEN
Yeah. Darkness sucks.

SETH DEVLIN raises his hand.

SETH
What if the parents like... put in photographs of Satan... pentagrams, dead people... stuff like that?

GRETCHEN
Is that what you'd show your kids?

Seth doesn't answer. There is only the 80 IQ grin.

DONNIE
Any parent who'd do that... deserves to die.

INT: HALLWAY -- DAY

As everyone is leaving class, Donnie stops at the door.

DONNIE
Dr. Monnitoff?

DR. MONNITOFF
Yes?

DONNIE
What do you know about time travel?

Dr. Monnitoff pauses, turns and looks at Donnie. He seems to know something.

CUT TO:

INT: PHYSICS CLASS -- DAY

Dr. Monitoff has drawn a DIAGRAM on the blackboard.

DR. MONNITOFF
So... according to Hawking... wormholes might be able to provide a shortcut for jumping between two distant regions of space-time.

DONNIE
So... in order to travel back in time you'd have to have a big space-ship capable of travelling faster than the speed of light...

DR. MONNITOFF
Theoretically.

DONNIE
...and be able to locate one of these wormholes.

DR. MONNITOFF
A wormhole with an Einstein-Rosen bridge, which is, theoretically a wormhole in space controlled by man.

DONNIE
So... that's it?

DR. MONNITOFF
The basic principals of time travel are there. You have the VESSEL and the PORTAL.

DONNIE
The vessel and the portal.

DR. MONNITOFF
Yes. The vessel can be anything. A spaceship... a person... a DeLorean.

Donnie smiles.

DR. MONNITOFF (cont'd)
Each vessel travels along a vector path through space-time... along its center of gravity.

DONNIE
(to himself)
Like a spear.

DR. MONNITOFF
Beg pardon?

DONNIE
Like a spear... that comes out of your stomach?

DR. MONNITOFF
Uh, sure... and in order for the vessel to travel through time it must find the PORTAL, in this case the wormhole, or some unforeseen portal that lies yet undiscovered.

DONNIE
Undiscovered. Could these wormholes appear in nature?

DR. MONNITOFF
(laughing)
That's highly unlikely. You're talking about an act of God.

DONNIE
But I've been reading about God and how he relates to time travel. If He controls time... then all time is pre-decided. Then every living thing travels along a set path.

DR. MONNITOFF
I'm not following you.

DONNIE
What I'm saying is... if you could see your path... or channel... growing out of your stomach... you could see into the future. And that's a form of time travel.

DR. MONNITOFF
You're contradicting yourself Donald. If we could see our destinies manifest themselves visually... as arrows growing from our stomachs... then we would be given the CHOICE. The option to BETRAY OUR CHOSEN DESTINIES. The very fact that this CHOICE would exist... would mean that all PRE-FORMED DESTINY would be extinguished.

DONNIE
Not if you CHOSE to stay within God's channel...

DR. MONNITOFF
(cutting him off)
Donald I'm afraid I can't continue this conversation. I could lose my job.

EXT: BYRD THEATRE -- AFTERNOON

The old fashioned theatre marquee reads:

HALLOWEEN FRIGHTMARE

"THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST"

"C.H.U.D."

Donnie and Gretchen approach the box office. The Box Office EMPLOYEE is spaced out, on the phone.

DONNIE
Two for "C.H.U.D." please.

INT: BYRD THEATRE -- AFTERNOON

Donnie and Gretchen sit in the middle of the huge, empty theatre.

"C.H.U.D." unfolds.

They eat POPCORN and watch silently.

DONNIE
I'll be right back.

Donnie gets up and walks to the back of the theatre.

He goes through the LOBBY toward the BATHROOM.

INT: BYRD THEATRE BATHROOM -- AFTERNOON

Donnie stands in front of the large mirror in the antique bathroom, washing his hands.

Suddenly, a wave of NAUSEA comes over Donnie and he holds onto the sink to keep from collapsing.

In the mirror... standing behind him is FRANK.

FRANK
Feeling sick?

DONNIE
What do you want?

FRANK
Just to talk. To show you something.

DONNIE
(beat)
I won't do what you say unless you do something for me.

FRANK
You have a request?

DONNIE
(in pain)
Yeah. Tell me why you're wearing that stupid fucking bunny suit.

FRANK
Tell me why you're wearing that stupid man suit.

DONNIE
(beat)
Then at least take off the helmet.

After a moment, Frank slowly reaches up and removes the RABBIT HEADPIECE.

Donnie's eyes WIDEN.

Underneath the headpiece is the HUMAN FACE of a HANDSOME YOUNG MAN.

His LEFT EYE does not EXIST, because it has IMPLODED INTO THE SOCKET.

There is BLOOD all over his FACE.

FRANK
Satisfied?

Donnie just stares at him.

DONNIE
What happened to your eye?

FRANK
I got what I deserved.

DONNIE
Why do they call you Frank?

FRANK
It is the name of my father... and his father before me.

DONNIE
How much longer is this going to last?

FRANK
You should already know that.
(beat)
Look into the mirror, Donnie. I have something to show you.

Donnie holds his side... clearly in pain.

As he looks into the mirror... his image SLOWLY DISAPPEARS.

In a flash of WHITE, the mirror image transforms into a SHEET OF BILLOWING STORM CLOUDS.

In the CENTER OF THE CLOUDS A BLINDING HEXAGONAL PLATE OF LIGHT APPEARS... AND THE CLOUDS SUCK DOWN AROUND ITS CAULDRON.

FRANK (cont'd)
Have you ever seen a portal, Donnie?

SUDDENLY... the MIRROR FLASHES BACK TO NORMAL.

Frank is still there.

INT: BYRD THEATRE -- AFTERNOON

Gretchen begins to fall asleep.

INT: BYRD THEATRE BATHROOM -- AFTERNOON

FRANK (cont'd)
You'll have an alibi.

DONNIE
(upset... intense pain)
I'll still get caught... because I've done it before.

FRANK
She'll be asleep in a few minutes. And that woman out front... She won't even notice when you leave.

Donnie contemplates his fate for several more moments.

INT: BYRD THEATRE LOBBY -- AFTERNOON

Donnie walks slowly through the lobby toward the exit. The woman in the box office is deep into a phone call.

She doesn't even notice when Donnie Darko leaves the theatre, gets on his bike, and rides off.

INT: AUDITORIUM -- EARLY EVENING

On the STAGE, among the falling flakes of FAKE SNOW, SHERITA CHOUDRAY performs a STRANGELY BEAUTIFUL MIME ACT to tune of MADAME BUTTERFLY.

She is still wearing her EARMUFFS.

The audience is quiet, except for some laughter from the rear.

When her act is finally over, the crowd is INDIFFERENT with a scattered applause and laughter.

AUDIENCE VOICE
You suck!

There is more laughter as the offending student is removed from the auditorium.

Clearly affected by the insult, SHERITA gives the audience DOUBLE MIDDLE FINGERS.

SHERITA
CHUT UP!

SHERITA walks off stage.

In the front row, the entire Darko family has assembled.

ROSE
(looking over her shoulder)
Where is Donnie?

ELIZABETH
I just checked outside. I don't think he's coming.

INT: AUDITORIUM BACKSTAGE -- EARLY EVENING

Kitty Farmer stands with the FIVE MEMBER DANCE TEAM in a HUDDLE.

MS. FARMER
(intense)
Now girls... I want you to concentrate. Failure is not an option. And Bethany...
(MORE)

MS. FARMER (cont'd)
if you feel the need to vomit up there, just swallow it.

BETH
OK Mom.

Jim Cunningham walks past them toward the stage. He stops and touches Samantha on the shoulder... smiling.

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Good luck out there.

She smiles nervously back at him. He exits onto the stage.

JIM CUNNINGHAM
Thank you... Sherita Choudray. That was "Autumn Angel".
(clearing his throat)
Next...
it it is my distinct pleasure to introduce to you... Suzy Adams... Emily Bates... Samantha Darko... Beth Farmer... and Jeanie James. They are... SPARKLE MOTION!

The AUDIENCE ROARS WITH APPLAUSE as the LIGHTS DIM.

[The following MONTAGE alternates between the AUDITORIUM STAGE and an UNKNOWN HOUSE].

CUT TO:

THE STAGE LIGHTS SLOWLY RAISE AS THE OPENING BEAT OF BANANARAMA'S "CRUEL SUMMER" BEGINS.

UNDER THE SOFT STAGE LIGHTS... "SPARKLE MOTION" BEGINS.

CUT TO:

IN THE LIVING ROOM OF AN UNKNOWN HOUSE...DONNIE WALKS THROUGH DOUSING A CAN OF GASOLINE.

CUT TO:

"SPARKLE MOTION"... IN PERFECT SYNCHRONICITY.

CUT TO:

DONNIE THROWS GASOLINE ALL OVER THE PLACE WITH PSYCHOTIC FORCE.

CUT TO:

"SPARKLE MOTION"... DOING UNGODLY GYMNASTICS.

CUT TO:

A TRAIL OF FIRE SPREADS FROM THE IRONING BOARD IN A SPIDER-SHAPED PATTERN OF GASOLINE THROUGHOUT THE ROOM.

CUT TO:

"SPARKLE MOTION"... DOING BACK FLIPS.

THE JUNIOR HIGH CROWD SQUEALS WITH GLEE.

A MYSTERY WOMAN EMERGES FROM THE BACK WALL OF THE AUDITORIUM.

CUT TO:

A COUCH AND CURTAINS BECOME ENGULFED IN FLAMES.

CUT TO:

"SPARKLE MOTION"... DOING THE ROGER RABBIT.

MIDDLESEX GIRLS ARE JUMPING UP AND DOWN IN THE AISLES.

EDDIE AND ROSE ARE SMILING EAR TO EAR.

ELIZABETH DARKO IS CRACKING UP AT THE ENTIRE SCENE.

CUT TO:

A GASOLINE TRAIL OF FIRE RACES INTO THE KITCHEN.

CUT TO:

"SPARKLE MOTION"... DOING MORE GYMNASTICS.

KIDS ARE GOING BONKERS IN THE AISLES.

THE MYSTERY WOMAN TAKES OFF HER GLASSES.

MS. POMEROY GETS INTO THE GROOVE.

CUT TO:

THE ENTIRE KITCHEN IS ENGULFED IN FLAMES.

THE OVEN IS OPEN.

CUT TO:

"SPARKLE MOTION"... ENTERS THE GRAND FINALE.

THE PARENTS ARE NOW ON THEIR FEET.

SHERITA CHOUDRAY SITS ALONE IN THE EMPTY HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE AUDITORIUM... DEFEATED AND ALONE.

CUT TO:

FIRE EXPLODES THROUGH A WINDOW OF THE HOUSE.

CUT TO:

"SPARKLE MOTION"... FINISHES WITH A TRIUMPHANT POSE.

THE CROWD ROARS EVEN LOUDER.

SCREAMING STUDENTS RUSH THE STAGE.

MAYHEM.

INT: BYRD THEATRE -- EVENING

The final frames of "C.H.U.D." unfold.

Donnie walks into the theatre and sits next to Gretchen... who is asleep.

As the credits roll, Donnie wakes her up.

GRETCHEN
What?
(disoriented)
How long was I asleep?

DONNIE
The whole movie.

He grabs her like he is going to kiss her.

DONNIE (cont'd)
Let's go.

GRETCHEN
Where are we going?

DONNIE
This special place I know about.

They get up and walk out of the theatre... holding hands.

EXT: CARPATHIAN RIDGE -- EVENING

Donnie and Gretchen stand at the edge of the cliff... staring out into the abyssal canyon.

Gretchen takes Donnie by the hand and kisses him.

[HELICOPTER SHOT]

WE SWOOP DOWN OVER CARPATHIAN RIDGE... PAST DONNIE AND GRETCHEN... OVER THE CANYON AND THE ENDLESS EXPANSE OF EVERGREEN FOREST.

AS THE TREES PASS BENEATH US, THE SCREAMS OF MIDDLESEX MONGRELS ECHO INTO THE HORIZON.

TITLE CARD: 22 OCT 1988

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- MORNING

Donnie and Eddie are in the backyard raking leaves onto a giant sheet.

EDDIE
Your sister is pretty upset that you missed her show last night.

DONNIE
I know... but I just thought that if I went, Ms. Farmer would freak out and the whole night would have been ruined. I just didn't want to embarrass everyone.

Eddie doesn't know how to respond.

DONNIE (cont'd)
I know everyone thinks I'm a nutcase. I've been getting a lot of weird looks from people lately.

They rake in silence for a moment.

EDDIE
(angry)
Who's been giving you weird looks?

DONNIE
A lot of people. Teachers. Younger kids at school are afraid of me for some reason. People at the club look at me like I'm gonna steal something.
(beat)
But that's OK... because I know I deserve it.

Eddie stops raking.

EDDIE
You're my only son...
(doesn't know how to finish)

DONNIE
I know dad.

EDDIE
You're my only son... and I know I'm not the best... communicator.
(beat)
But whatever happens in your life... whatever obstacles you come up against. You just say... and do whatever is in your heart. You be honest... and tell the truth... even if they look at you funny... and they will... And they'll tell you that you're wrong. They'll call you a fool.
(beat)
But what you've got to understand, son, is that almost all of those people are full of shit. They're all part of this great big conspiracy of bullshit... and they're scared of people like you. Because you're smarter than all of them.

Donnie leans against his rake, looking down at the huge pile of leaves.

Once again he doesn't know what to say.

DONNIE
I think this load is full. Let's take it out back.

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Donnie sits on his bed and stares at the Ansel Adams calendar on his wall.

Each day is marked with an X.

He takes his pills from his nightstand... and downs three.

There are noises coming from downstairs.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

Donnie comes downstairs to see Elizabeth and Kristen glued to the T.V.

ELIZABETH
Oh my God... that's him. That's the guy from last night.

DONNIE
What's going on?

ELIZABETH
Shhhh. Be quiet.

ON THE TELEVISION:

SUZANNE TODD stands in front of the charred heap of what was once a LARGE SUBURBAN HOUSE.

FIREFIGHTERS mill about behind her.

SUZANNE
Neighbors called the fire department early yesterday evening. But by the time they arrived... Cunningham's Tudor mansion was already engulfed in flames. As firefighters continue their investigation, arson has not been ruled out as the cause of the fire, particularly because of the shocking discovery made earlier today among the burned ruins.

A firefighter emerges from beneath the ground through a charred door frame.

SUZANNE (cont'd)
In the basement of the house authorities have discovered what has been described as a child-pornography dungeon.

Policemen emerge from the basement with several large boxes of evidence.

SUZANNE (cont'd)
Authorities have confiscated several boxes of explicit child pornography. Cunningham, who has become a recent celebrity for his motivational books, audio tapes and videos, ducked his head from cameras when he was arraigned at Middlesex County Courthouse just hours ago.

Donnie stares at the television... speechless, horrified.

KRISTEN
Oh my God. My dad played golf with that guy.

ELIZABETH
So did mine.
(beat)
Donnie, didn't this guy speak at your school all the time?

Donnie says nothing, turns around... and walks upstairs.

TITLE CARD: 24 OCT 1988

INT: PRINCIPAL COLE'S OFFICE -- MORNING

THE MYSTERY WOMAN sits across from Principal Cole.

The SPARKLE MOTION girls squeal with excitement... jumping up and down in his office.

INT: ENGLISH CLASS -- DAY

Donnie looks haggard... with dark circles under his eyes.

MS. POMEROY
And when the other rabbits hear of Bigwig's death, their sorrow is two-fold, for they mourn the loss of a friend... but also the loss of innocence. With a doomed city destroyed... their fates are inextricably tied together. It is the death of an entire way of life... the end of an era.

Gretchen appears sorrowful.

DONNIE
(almost to himself)
Why should we care?

MS. POMEROY
Because the rabbits are us. And we are them.

DONNIE
(beat)
Why should I mourn the death of a rabbit... as I would another human being?

MS. POMEROY
Is the death of one species less tragic than another?

DONNIE
Of course. A rabbit has little capacity for memory. It has no history books... it has no knowledge of sorrow or regret. It has no photographs... no mirrors. Why should I cry for a dead rabbit... who never feared death to begin with?

BETH
(sad)
But I like the bunnies.

DONNIE
I like them too. They're cute... and they're horny. And if you're cute and horny... then you're probably happy. You're probably happy that you don't even know what your own blood looks like... that you don't know who you are... or why you're even alive. You're just soft and cuddly... and you want to have sex as many times as possible before you die.
(beat)
As a whole... I'd bet rabbits are happier than most human beings. But if I had to choose between saving a rabbit... or a human being...
(beat)
Well... there's no contest.

The class is silent for a moment.

GRETCHEN
You're wrong.
(beat)
You're wrong about these rabbits. These rabbits can talk. They speak English. They are the product of the author's imagination. And he cares for them. He cares for his rabbits more than most authors care for their human characters. So we have to care for them too. We have to care that their home has been destroyed... and that their lives are in danger. Otherwise... we've missed the point.

MS. POMEROY
But what we are forgetting dear children... is how the story ends. The Dea ex Machina. The savior... manifested as a young girl named Lucy. By the miracle of storytelling... the rabbits are saved.

Gretchen looks across the room at Donnie with a disdainful expression.

Suddenly, the intercom comes on:

PRINCIPAL COLE
(on the intercom)
Good afternoon. It is my great pleasure to announce that earlier today, The Middlesex Middle School Dance Team was selected to perform on Ed McMahon's Star Search in Los Angeles, California.

The class bursts into commotion... congratulating Beth Farmer, while Donnie stares at Gretchen longingly.

INT: SCHOOL HALLWAY -- DAY.

Donnie approaches Gretchen at her locker.

DONNIE
You want to skip fourth period and go to the ridge?

GRETCHEN
(angry)
What's wrong with you?

DONNIE
What do you mean?

GRETCHEN
(beat)
I don't think I want to know you anymore.

She turns and walks off, leaving Donnie broken and dejected.

INT: ART CLASS -- AFTERNOON

Donnie stands in front of the classroom... presenting his UNCONSCIOUS DRAWING to Mr. Ferrell and the rest of the class.

It is a richly detailed CLOUD FORMATION with a HEXAGONAL PLATE in the center. Trails of SMOKE emanate from around it.

DONNIE
So this is it. This is what the back of my eyelids look like.

MR. FERRELL
Very intriguing Donnie. But... I'm troubled by the composition. You've put the seed in the direct center of the canvass. It's almost... mathematical.

DONNIE
Well that's what I like about math. I think that math makes art better.

MR. FERRELL
What do you call it?

DONNIE
Beg pardon?

MR. FERRELL
Your drawing... you have to name it. It's part of your grade.

DONNIE
(long beat)
The Portal.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

Commotion. Rose and Eddie are in the kitchen. He is getting ready for a business trip.

Samantha is jumping up and down in the living room... listening to THE ESCAPE CLUB'S "WILD WILD WEST". Elizabeth is at the kitchen table studying.

SAMANTHA
Star Search! Star Search! Star...

ROSE
(to Samantha)
Honey... Ed McMahon can't hear you.

SAMANTHA
Yes he can.

EDDIE
(spinning Rose across the kitchen)
We'll be dancing into the nineties.

ELIZABETH
Headin' for the nineties, dad.
(singing)
Headin' for the nineties... livin' in the wild, wild west...

Donnie comes down the stairs, catching his family in a serene, content moment of happiness. A moment that he chooses not to interrupt.

TITLE CARD: 25 OCT 1988

EXT: MIDDLESEX MALL -- EARLY MORNING

Donnie jolts awake, as a hand touches his shoulder.

He is lying in the fetal position in a SHALLOW FOUNTAIN in the center of the SHOPPING MALL.

A SECURITY GUARD is shaking him.

Several early morning shoppers stand around... gawking.

SECURITY GUARD
(mildly retarded)
Son... do you need a doctor?

Donnie staggers to his feet defensively, disoriented, and moves quickly away from the crowd.

SOAKING WET, he stumbles quickly through the mall, trying to make it to the exit.

The LIQUID SPEARS have re-appeared... they snake from peoples stomachs through the shopping mall.

Dazed, Donnie follows his spear through the mall until he reaches a SPENCER'S gift shop window.

In the window there are dozens of grotesque HALLOWEEN MASKS on display.

Among them is FRANK'S MASK.

It is watching him.

TITLE CARD: 26 OCT 1988

INT: SARASOTA MARKETPLACE -- DAY

Rose pushes her cart through the FROZEN FOODS. She grabs some Eggo Waffles from one of the freezers.

MS. FARMER
Rose!

Rose jumps... dropping the Waffles onto the floor.

Kitty Farmer is DISASTROUSLY UNKEMPT. She is wearing a Moo-Moo with a large KETCHUP STAIN.

ROSE
(trying to be polite)
Kitty...

MS. FARMER
Rose... we have a crisis.

ROSE
We... do?

MS. FARMER
Rose... I am sure that you are aware of the horrible allegations against Jim Cunningham.

ROSE
Yes... I saw the news. Something about child pornography...

MS. FARMER
(holding up her hand)
Please! Don't say those words.
(shaking her head)
Well... as you can see... many of us are devastated by this news. This is obviously some kind of conspiracy meant to destroy an innocent man. And I have taken it upon myself to spearhead the Jim Cunningham defense campaign. But unfortunately my civic duties have created a conflict of interest... which involves you.

ROSE
(perplexed)
Beg pardon?

MS. FARMER
(impatient)
Rose... I have to appear at his arraignment tomorrow morning. And as you know the girls also leave for Los Angeles tomorrow morning. Now, as their coach... I was the obvious choice to chaperone them on the trip.

ROSE
But... now you can't go.

MS. FARMER
Yes. And believe me... of all the other mothers I would never dream of asking you... given the predicament with you're... son. But none of the other mothers are able to go.

ROSE
(beat)
Oh Kitty... I don't know. This is so last minute... Eddie is in New York...

MS. FARMER
Rose... I don't know if you realize how great of an opportunity this is for our daughters. This has been a dream of ours for a long time.
(derisive)
Sometimes I doubt your commitment to Sparkle Motion.

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie lays on his bed, staring at his Calendar silently. Rose stands in the doorway, knocking on the door softly.

ROSE
I have to take the girls to Los Angeles tomorrow.

DONNIE
Do you get to meet Ed?

ROSE
If I'm lucky.
(beat)
So... I won't be back until the first. You're dad will be back on Saturday, so I've put Elizabeth in charge until then. She has my car... so she can drive you to your therapy tomorrow.

DONNIE
How does it feel to have a wacko for a son?
(beat)
I know that's what she told you. That I'm crazy.
(beat)
I feel like... I'm approaching something horrible.

ROSE
(long beat, sad)
It's never to late to start over, Donald. It's never to late.

DONNIE
(long beat)
I don't know, mom. Maybe it is too late.

TITLE CARD: 27 OCT 1988

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE DRIVEWAY -- MORNING

Rose brings her luggage out to the AIRPORT VAN. JANICE BELCHER (THE MYSTERY WOMAN) loads the girls into the van.

JANICE
Good work girls. That's packing Hollywood style.

Donnie sits on the back porch steps, watching everyone silently.

Elizabeth gives Samantha a hug.

ELIZABETH
Break a leg little sis.

SAMANTHA
Thanks.
(to Donnie)
Bye Donnie.

Donnie waves goodbye.

ROSE
Here are the keys to the Taurus. There's plenty of groceries in the fridge. And I left money on the island. And don't forget...

ELIZABETH
Don't worry mom. Just go... you'll miss your flight.

Rose turns... wanting to say goodbye to Donnie, but not knowing how.

She smiles and waves goodbye.

Donnie waves back.

Rose turns and goes to the van... handing the driver her last bag.

DONNIE
Mom...

Donnie stands up, and reluctantly approaches from the porch.

DONNIE (cont'd)
There's nothing broken... in my brain.

Rose stands there for a moment looking at her only son.

SAMANTHA
Come on mom!

ROSE
(to Donnie, holding back tears)
I know.

She gets into the van, as Donnie and Elizabeth watch them drive off.

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

Donnie is under hypnosis.

DR. THURMAN
So your parents... why did you disappoint them?

DONNIE
I... I was playing with fire.

DR. THURMAN
Does Frank want you to play with fire? Is it Frank that wants you to destroy the world, to set the world on fire?

Donnie doesn't answer.

DR. THURMAN
What happens when you play with fire?

DONNIE
People get hurt.

DR. THURMAN
But the house was empty.

DONNIE
People still get hurt. I don't want to hurt anyone.

DR. THURMAN
But you were punished.

DONNIE
Yes. I went to jail.

DR. THURMAN
Do you wish that you were punished by your parents instead?

DONNIE
They... didn't buy me what I wanted for Christmas that year.

DR. THURMAN
What did you want for Christmas that year?

DONNIE
Hungry Hungry Hippos.

DR. THURMAN
Did you feel regret... from being denied these Hungry Hungry Hippos?

DONNIE
No. I felt regret because I hurt the person who owned that house.

DR. THURMAN
What else makes you feel regret?

DONNIE
That I did it again. I burned down that pervert's house... and because of me he'll go to jail.

DR. THURMAN
(alarmed)
You've done it again.

DONNIE
Yes. I flooded my school... and I burned down a house. I think I only have a few days left... before they catch me.

DR. THURMAN
Why did you do these things Donnie?

DONNIE
Because...

DR. THURMAN
Did Frank tell you to commit these crimes?

DONNIE
Yes. I did these things because he told me to.

DR. THURMAN
Donald... do you still believe that Frank is in fact an apparition... a messenger who proves that God exists?

DONNIE
I have to obey him... He saved my life. I'm his puppet. He controls me and I have to obey him or I'll be left all alone... and I'll never figure out what all of this means... if Frank really exists.

DR. THURMAN
If God exists.

DONNIE
He has to exist.

DR. THURMAN
Why does God exist?

DONNIE
Because I'm so horny.

DR. THURMAN
God exists because you are horny.

DONNIE
I think so. I think that's one of the clues. It's a clue that tells us... the human race... that we're supposed to keep going.

DR. THURMAN
Where are we going?

DONNIE
Into the future. But... we can travel back in time.

DR. THURMAN
How is that possible?

DONNIE
We can't do it alone. We can't... build a time machine yet...

DR. THURMAN
Then how is time travel possible?

DONNIE
Because of God. He'll lead me to his portal... a miracle. Then I could go back in time... and I wouldn't feel any more regret.

DR. THURMAN
When will this miracle take place?

DONNIE
Soon... it has to happen soon. Time's almost up.

Donnie gets up on his feet staggering around the room. He looks frightened... childlike.

DONNIE (cont'd)
It has to happen soon... because I'm already dead. I'm already dead.

Dr. Thurman gets up and tries to control Donnie... following him around the room.

DR. THURMAN
How did you die, Donald?

DONNIE
(freaking out)
I was killed.

DR. THURMAN
Who killed you, Donald?

DONNIE
(almost crying)
A jet engine... I was killed by a jet engine that fell from the sky.

Dr. Thurman grabs his flailing body, trying to get him under control in an awkward embrace.

DR. THURMAN
This freak accident... this near death experience... you must confront it. Because YOU are the puppeteer Donald, and Frank is your puppet. You have created him... and he has betrayed you. You must set him free.

Donnie stares across the office like a frightened child... as the room becomes white with artificial light.

FRANK IS THERE IN THE OFFICE... STARING BACK AT HIM.

DONNIE
(freaking out)
I can see him right now!

DR. THURMAN
Where is he Donald?

DONNIE
He's standing right in front of us! He's right there... he can read my mind... and he'll show me the way out of this.

DR. THURMAN
If the sky were suddenly to open up and God were to reveal himself to you... There would be no law... there would be no rule. There would only be you and your memories... the choices you've made and the people you've touched. The life that has been carved out from your subconscious is the only evidence by which you will be judged... by which you must judge yourself. Because when this world ends there will only be you and him... and no one else.

DONNIE (cont'd)
(almost crying)
I'm already dead... I'm already dead... I'm fourteen years old and I already ruined my whole life.

DR. THURMAN
You're alive... Donald. I promise you that you're very much alive.
(beat)
And when I clap my hands together... you will wake up.

She claps her hands together twice... and Donnie snaps out of his trance... and Frank is gone.

CUT TO:

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE -- EVENING

Donnie, calmed down and putting his jacket on, walks slowly to the doorway.

Dr. Thurman stands looking out the window, smoking a cigarette.

DR. THURMAN
Donald?

Donnie turns back and faces her.

DR. THURMAN (cont'd)
Don't bother taking your medication any more. They are placebos. Just pills made of water. That is what they've been all along.

DONNIE
(long beat)
Good-bye Dr. Thurman.

And then he is gone.

TITLE CARD: 28 OCT 1988

INT: MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON

Donnie walks up to Gretchen... who stands at her locker with several other girls.

The girls whisper to each other as she approaches.

DONNIE
Will you please talk to me?

GRETCHEN
Not now Donnie. It isn't a good time.

DONNIE
Then when? I have to talk to you.

SUZY
Come on Gretchen, lets go.

JILL
She doesn't want to talk to you.

Gretchen walks away with the girls, looking back at him with apologetic eyes.

INT: MIDDLESEX MIDDLE SCHOOL -- AFTERSCHOOL

Donnie walks alone through the hallways... lost.

He stumbles upon Ms. Pomeroy's room.

She sits behind her desk... which has been packed up into a CARDBOARD BOX.

She is sniffing WHITE OUT.

DONNIE
(knocking on the door)
Ms. Pomeroy... what's going on?

MS. POMEROY
Donnie Darko... school's over... and it's Friday. Shouldn't you be off with your friends, scaring old people?

DONNIE
Probably...
(beat)
Where are you going?

MS. POMEROY
I don't know. That's a good question... but suffice it to say that I am no longer your English teacher.

DONNIE
Why not?

MS. POMEROY
(laughing)
I've been let go.

She takes another long snifr from her bottle of LIQUID PAPER. This is clearly a nervous breakdown.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
It seems Donnie... that Virginia's public schools cannot tolerate educators who defy the status quo.

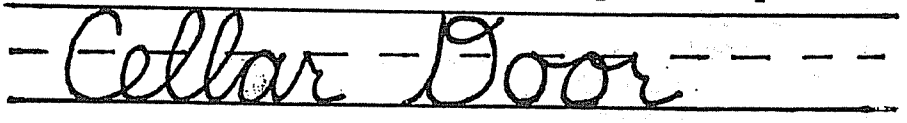
DONNIE
That's bullshit. I think you're a good teacher.

MS. POMEROY
Thank you Donnie. I think that you are a good student. Lazy...
but still a good student. Unlike most of the others, you question the rules. Most of the other children are nothing more than lazy slugs of meat... traipsing through the hallways without a clue. And if you give them a bad grade... they go home and cry to mom and dad. And because mom and dad are also incredibly lazy... they buy the children drugs, because some greedy doctor came up with some cute initials to describe laziness.

Sniff.

Donnie looks at the blackboard.

On it she has written in perfect penmanship:



MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
It is up to the children to save themselves these days. Because the parents... they don't have a clue.

DONNIE
What's... "Cellar Door"?

MS. POMEROY
Cellar Door.
(laughing)
Cellar Door... is perfection. A famous linguist once said... that of all the phrases in the English language, of all the endless combinations of words in all of history... that Cellar Door is the most beautiful. Its cadence... the way it rolls off the tongue with such delicate, effortless grace... is unprecedented.

Sniff.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
(forceful)
Say it. Cellar Door.

DONNIE
Cellar Door.

MS. POMEROY
In all our lives... we will forever search for that Cellar Door. That object of perfection that isn't supposed to exist... but deep in our hearts we know that it does. It has to exist... because sometimes it is the only thing that keeps us going.

Ms. Pomeroy takes one last SNIFF, and then drops the bottle of LIQUID PAPER into the box.

She takes the box, and crosses the room toward Donnie.

MS. POMEROY (cont'd)
So... will Donnie Darko find his Cellar Door?

DONNIE
I... I think I already have.
(beat)
But now she won't even talk to me.

MS. POMEROY
Then go to her, Donnie. Don't let her get away.
(stopping at the door)
She was right about the rabbits.

DONNIE
What do I tell the rest of the class when they ask about you?

MS. POMEROY
(beat)
Tell them this message... straight from the mouth of Barbara Pomeroy:
(beat)
I'LL SEE YOU IN HELL.

And with that... Barbara Pomeroy turns and walks down the hallway with her career in a cardboard box... heading toward the bright Friday afternoon sunlight.

Donnie walks back down the hallway... lost in his own introspection.

Across the way... at her locker... is Sherita Choudray.

Donnie approaches her slowly like a cat.

She turns from her locker... and they make eye contact.

She looks at him warily, frightened.

A book falls from her arms onto the floor.

Written in large letters on the brown book cover is his name: DONNIE DARKO.

He picks it up.

He comes face to face with her, grabs her EARMUFFS with both hands, and touches his forehead to hers as if he were going to kiss her.

DONNIE
(long beat)
I promise... that one day... things will get better for you.

Sherita holds still for a moment, trembling, and then jerks back from him.

Her EARMUFFS come off in his hands.

She backs away from him slowly. A single tear rolls down her cheek.

SHERITA
Chut... up!

She then turns and runs down the hall... disappearing from sight.

EXT: SARASOTA DRIVE -- AFTERNOON

Donnie walks by himself... thinking... wearing Sherita's EARMUFFS.

He then stops at the corner, takes them off and throws them in the garbage. He then takes off his backpack, and dumps all of his SCHOOLBOOKS into the garbage can as well.

A Pontiac Trans-am speeds by.

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Donnie sits at his desk, sealing an envelope. The address reads:

MS. ROBERTA SPARROW

22 OLD GUN ROAD

MIDDLESEX, VA 23189

TITLE CARD: 29 OCT 1988

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- DAY

Donnie walks downstairs and into the kitchen where Elizabeth and her friends KRISTEN and JULIE are hugging each other and carrying on.

KRISTEN
Oh my God... you fucking Ivy League bitch!

JULIE
We have to celebrate tonight.

DONNIE
You got in.

ELIZABETH
(in shock)
I got in. I'm going to Harvard.

DONNIE
Congratulations.

Donnie gives his sister a hug.

DONNIE (cont'd)
Oh yeah... Dad just called from New York... and now he won't be back until Sunday night. So if you wanted to throw a party here... you could get away with it, easy.

KRISTEN
Listen to your little brother, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH
(long beat)
OK... but it has to be a small.

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- NIGHT

There are at least two dozen cars parked in front... and somebody is already throwing toilet paper in the trees.

DEF LEPPARD'S "POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME" can be heard outside.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

The DOORBELL RINGS. Donnie answers the door... only to find Sean and Ronald dressed in black with MONSTER MASKS. They are both carrying BACKPACKS.

Donnie is dressed in a black skeleton suit, and his face is painted white like a SKULL.

SEAN
(excited)
We got eggs, water balloons and a dozen rolls of toilet paper.

RONALD
I stole four beers from my dad.

DONNIE
There's tons of Beast here.

SEAN
Milwaukee's Best? That's good shit.

They go back into the house where a DISCO BALL is in full effect. There are at least forty people already quite WASTED, many carrying their own TWELVE PACKS of BEAST or NATURAL LIGHT under their arms.

This is MIDDLESEX HIGH at its best.

Almost everyone is wearing COSTUMES. MADONNA... PEE-WEE HERMAN... RONALD REAGAN... ALF... all are present.

Donnie and his friends weave through the crowd toward the kitchen.

DONNIE
Don't let my sister see you drinking. She'll freak out.

SEAN
Which one's your sister?

DONNIE
Nancy Reagan.

Donnie and his friends steal several beers from the refrigerator and sit on the steps... watching the party unfold.

In their masks they are less conspicuous among the high school crowd.

SEAN
(to Ronald)
Hey... did you tell your parents you were sleeping over at my house?

RONALD
Yeah... and I'm sleeping over at your house.

SEAN
Your mom better not call my mom.

RONALD
Don't worry... my mom hates your mom. She won't call.

SEAN
Cool.

The party grows larger.

The doorbell rings... and once again Donnie is the one to answer it.

To his surprise... it is Gretchen standing on his front porch.

GRETCHEN
(very upset)
Donnie... can I come in?

DONNIE
Yeah... what's wrong?

GRETCHEN
It's my dad... I think he kidnapped my mom. I came home this afternoon... and the house was completely turned upside down... and my mom was gone.

DONNIE
Did you call the cops?

GRETCHEN
Yeah... they told me to get out of the house... go to a neighbor's.

Donnie takes Gretchen into the hallway and gives her a hug.

GRETCHEN
I'm so sorry... I just keep thinking that my mom is dead. That he stabbed her again.

DONNIE
Don't worry... you're safe with me. I'll protect you.

Donnie takes Gretchen back through the party and upstairs.

SEAN
(to Donnie)
Hey... where you going?

RONALD
Hey... at midnight we want to hit the streets.

Elizabeth walks over to talk to a friend.

ELIZABETH
(yelling over the music)
Have you seen Frank?

JULIE
No... I think they said they were going on a beer run.

INT: DONNIE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Donnie and Gretchen sit on his bed.

GRETCHEN
I don't know what's going to happen tonight. It could be bad.

DONNIE
Whatever happens... I promise that you'll be safe with me. I promise.

She takes his hand and holds it against her face.

DONNIE (cont'd)
There's something you have to know Gretchen...

GRETCHEN
What is it?

DONNIE
I've done some... terrible things. And I've said some terrible things. And I can't take them back. And if it comes down to it. . if... the cops get involved...

GRETCHEN
Whatever you've done... you can fix.

DONNIE
You don't understand it's too late. After tonight... it's all over for me.

GRETCHEN
Donnie you live in this great house... and you lived through this freak accident. You're a survivor and you're going to make it. You don't have tragedy in your blood.

DONNIE
What's tragic blood?

GRETCHEN
The blood that's in me. It's what my mom used to say. Some people are just born with tragic blood.
(MORE)

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
They just aren't meant to make it very far before someone shows up and takes it all away.

Donnie just stares back at her, not knowing what to say.

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
No one could ever take this life from you.

Donnie takes her and pulls her onto his bed, and they lay down together... silently listening to the party below.

From below... THE CURE'S "JUST LIKE HEAVEN" echoes through the house as the party grows even larger.

INT: MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The phone is ringing.

The answering machine picks up.

ROSE
Elizabeth... Donnie... if you're there please pick up.
(beat)
Oh well... there's good news. The girls... they got four and a half stars... and they get to come back for the quarter finals.

INT: LAX NORTHWEST TERMINAL -- NIGHT

Rose stands at a pay phone while the Sparkle Motion girls wait at the terminal.

SAMANTHA
(in the background)
Semi-finals, mom!

ROSE
Sorry... Semi-finals. Anyway... we're taking the red-eye back tonight and we should arrive around six A.M. I hope everything is alright. I'll call again from the airport. Bye.

BETH
Ms. Darko! You have to hurry... they're almost done boarding!

Rose hurries toward the gate.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

Donnie and Gretchen walk downstairs. Gretchen sits down next to Sean and Ronald while Donnie weaves through the crowd toward the kitchen.

Everyone dances to TEARS FOR FEARS' "SHOUT".

Slowly... Donnie begins to look nauseous again... as the room begins to twirl in slow-motion.

Suddenly... the room BLOWS OUT WITH A STROBE OF WHITE LIGHT... as COSTUMED TEENAGERS and their VECTOR SPEARS INTERSECT IN A SHIMMERING MAZE OF CHAOS.

Donnie slowly follows his SPEAR as it leads him through the crowd... directly toward the REFRIGERATOR.

Donnie stares blankly at what he sees... scrawled in MAGIC MARKER on the MEMO BOARD.

It reads:

Frank was here. Went to get BEER!!

Donnie stares at the BOARD for several moments... as the room suddenly goes back to NORMAL.

Donnie turns to his right... and sees WONDER WOMAN.

DONNIE
(distraught)
Hey... can you see that?

WONDER WOMAN
What?

DONNIE
(pointing to the memo board)
What does that say?

WONDER WOMAN
(bitchy)
It says... Frank was here.

Donnie turns around and looks around at the rest of the party. Frank is nowhere to be seen.

Donnie walks back to the steps where Gretchen, Sean and Ronald are sitting.

GRETCHEN
Donnie... did they tell you?

DONNIE
Tell me what?

GRETCHEN
About Grandma Death.

DONNIE
(anxious)
What about her?

SEAN
It's not that big of a deal... I just overheard them talking about it in the bathroom yesterday.

DONNIE
Who?

GRETCHEN
Those guys who beat you up playing football that day. They're going to rob Grandma Death tonight.

SEAN
Everyone knows she's got tons of diamonds, man.

Donnie looks at Gretchen... this is it.

DONNIE
We've got to go... we've got to go help her.

TITLE CARD: 30 OCT 1988

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- MIDNIGHT

The group of FOUR ride their bikes through the front yard and onto the cart path of the GOLF COURSE.

RONALD
What's the big deal... Donnie? Why don't we just call the cops?

DONNIE
Forget it. We have to go. You'll just have to trust me.

SEAN
Why are you acting so weird?

DONNIE
Just trust me. We have to do this.

SEAN
This is just like we're The Goonies.

The ride their bikes through the CARPATHIAN WOODS SHORTCUT.

EXT: GRANDMA DEATH'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

They stand in front of the dark house.

It is pitch black. No lights anywhere... except from the moon above.

GRETCHEN
What do we do?

DONNIE
We knock on the door... see if anyone's home.

Donnie approaches the front door slowly with his FLASHLIGHT... and knocks on the door.

No answer. No movement.

He knocks again. Nothing.

SEAN
There's nobody here... just forget it.

Then... there is a clanking noise from somewhere around the side of the house.

Everyone hears it.

Donnie walks around to the side yard... leading ahead with his flashlight.

On the side of the house is a CELLAR DOOR.

GRETCHEN
Is that a cellar?

DONNIE
Yeah... and someone's been down there already.

The cellar door is ajar... and there is a dim light coming out from inside.

RONALD
Don't open it Donnie... let's just leave.

INT: GRANDMA DEATH'S CELLAR -- NIGHT

They open the door to the Cellar... and descend down into a murky pit with a stone floor.

Inside... the room is quite large... filled with row after row of boxes, paintings, antique furniture and chandeliers. There is even an ancient GRAND PIANO in the back.

SEAN
It's a hidden treasure.

Gretchen slowly reaches her hand out and places her finger on the deepest piano key.

Suddenly, a figure emerges from the shadows and slams Donnie into the wall. He then grabs Gretchen by placing an arm around her neck with a BUTCHER KNIFE.

It is Seth Devlin. Ricky comes out from another corner... also brandishing a butcher knife.

Both have Panty Hose pulled over their heads.

RICKY
Get the fuck out! Now!

Sean and Ronald run back up the stairs, while Seth drags Gretchen out.

Donnie staggers up to his feet, dizzy with pain, holding his head.

He hears yelling outside and tries to make it up the stairs.

EXT: GRANDMA DEATH'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Donnie comes back through the cellar door and rounds the corner of the house into the front yard.

Seth comes at him with the knife... knocking him to the ground with the handle.

He holds Donnie's arms down with his knees and places the butcher knife against his throat.

Ricky throws Gretchen down hard onto the shoulder of Old Gun Road.

She lets out a gasp of pain as her head hits the gravel.

RICKY
Motherfuckers!

SETH
I have... a bigger knife now.

Sean and Ronald watch... dumbfounded... backing away.

DONNIE
...and I have a gun.

With a click, Donnie has the safety off on his father's .44... which is aimed right at Seth's head.

DONNIE (cont'd)
If you cut me... I'll pull the trigger.

Seth just stares down at Donnie with his dead eyes... pushing the knife down harder, cutting off Donnie's air supply.

SEAN
Hey... there's someone coming! Look... there's a car coming!

Seth slowly turns his head and sees... far down Old Gun Road... approaching headlights.

DONNIE
(barely audible whisper)
Deus ex Machina...

SETH
What did you say?

DONNIE
Our savior... you better run... because I bet that's a cop car.

The headlights are getting closer.

RICKY
They called the fuckin' cops!

Gretchen struggles to breathe on the shoulder of the road... the wind knocked out of her, semi-conscious.

SETH
That's no cop...

DONNIE
Are you sure about that?

The headlights are getting closer.

SEAN
Let him go... man.

GRETCHEN
(in a hoarse whisper)
Donnie...

Even closer...

RICKY
Forget it... let's go!

Seth doesn't move... he just stares down at Donnie.

RICKY (cont'd)
Come on! Let's go!

SETH
You're already dead anyway.

Seth gets up and runs off with Ricky into the forest... just as the approaching car crests the top of Old Gun Road at breakneck speed.

Suddenly, in the bright glow of the car's HEADLIGHTS... is the silhouette of GRANDMA DEATH... standing in the middle of the road.

In her right hand she is clutching a LETTER.

GRETCHEN
Donnie...

With a loud THUMP!... the PONTIAC TRANS-AM COLLIDES HEAD-ON WITH GRANDMA DEATH'S FRAIL BODY...
WHICH CRUMPLES OVER ONTO THE HOOD... SMASHING INTO THE WINDSHIELD... AND THEN CARTWHEELING OVER THE ROOF AND INTO THE AIR LIKE A RAG DOLL.

The Pontiac tries to brake hard... but the wheels lock... and it goes skidding onto the shoulder.

Gretchen raises her head from the gravel... into bright HEADLIGHT BEAMS.

THE TRANS-AM GOES BARRELLING OVER HER LIKE A SPEED-BUMP... AND HER LIMP BODY ROLLS OFF INTO THE GRASSY DITCH.

The TRANS-AM SKIDS OFF INTO THE GRASS AND COLLIDES HEAD-ON WITH THE CRUMBLING STONE CHIMNEY... WHICH EXPLODES INTO THE CRUMPLED HOOD OF THE CAR... AS IT EVENTUALLY COMES TO A STOP IN A FURY OF SMOKE.

Donnie staggers to his feet... regaining his breath. He runs over to Gretchen and kneels down next to her.

DONNIE
Gretchen... wake up. Wake up.

Her neck is broken. She has no pulse.

The passenger door to the TRANS-AM opens, and a Middlesex High School senior gets out.

THE DRIVER'S SIDE DOOR OPENS AND ANOTHER MIDDLESEX HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR GETS OUT.

HE IS WEARING A RABBIT SUIT. A HALLOWEEN COSTUME.

HE DROPS THE GROTESQUE RABBIT HELMET TO THE GROUND.

IT IS FRANK.

PASSENGER
Oh my God... Frank... what'd you do... what'd you do.

Frank approaches Donnie... who raises his head from Gretchen to see him for the first time... face to face... with an expression of SHOCKED HORROR.

PASSENGER (cont'd)
They're dead... they're both dead.

Frank is silent... calm.

FRANK
Is she dead?

Donnie slowly nods his head.

Sean and Ronald approach Donnie slowly.

FRANK (cont'd)
(enraged)
What the fuck was she doing in the middle of the road!

PASSENGER
Let's get out of here... I think Jimmy's dead too. Let's get out of here Frank!

FRANK
Is the old bitch dead too?

Donnie stares at Frank silently... and then nods his head again. Sean and Ronald approach from behind... in shock.

FRANK (cont'd)
Look at my car! What were you stupid fucks doing in the middle of the road?

DONNIE
(long beat)
Waiting for you.

Donnie raises the .44 with his right hand, and to his own surprise, he pulls the trigger.

FRANK'S LEFT EYE IMPLODES AS THE BULLET PASSES THROUGH HIS HEAD.

HIS BODY FALLS LIMPLY TO THE GROUND.

PASSENGER
Holy shit...

The Passenger turns and runs off into the woods.

SEAN
What'd you do, Donnie? What'd you do!

DONNIE
Go home. Just run home.

After contemplation of the recent events... Sean and Ronald turn and run off in the opposite direction.

Donnie is left alone... with the dead bodies.

Donnie walks over to Grandma Death's body... splayed across the road... and sees an envelope laying in the street.

It is his letter.

He turns back and picks Gretchen up into his arms and walks off into the woods... on the same path.

Donnie carries her all the way back to his house.

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- NIGHT

Donnie places Gretchen's body in the passenger seat of the Taurus Wagon.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EVENING

Donnie walks carefully into the family room.

There are a dozen kids asleep in the family room.

The CD player is skipping. Tears for Fears' "Shout" repeats like a hypnotic alarm.

Donnie stands looking down at his sister on the couch.

He then leans down and gives her a kiss on the forehead.

Donnie walks slowly through the room... toward the kitchen.

Donnie takes the car keys from the counter and goes back outside.

INT: THE DARKO FORD TAURUS -- EARLY MORNING

Donnie gets behind the wheel and starts the engine.

He carefully pulls the Taurus out of the driveway... dodging the other cars... and tears through the front yard, smashing through the white fence in front of his house, pulling out into the street.

Donnie takes the Taurus down Sarasota drive.

Donnie pulls the Taurus up to an intersection. Several POLICE CARS with their SIRENS BLARING fly past him through the stop light.

EXT: OLD GUN ROAD -- EARLY MORNING

A POLICE OFFICER picks up Frank's helmet... handing it to another DETECTIVE as EMS TECHNICIANS bag the bodies.

Another Police Officer picks up the LETTER that lies on the shoulder of the road near ROBERTA SPARROW'S BODY... reading the return address: DONNIE DARKO.

EXT: SARASOTA DRIVE -- EARLY MORNING

Donnie pulls off onto the dirt road that weaves through Carpathian Woods.

The Taurus works its way down the dirt road.

It follows a path that eventually leads to the crest of a hill... leading down to Carpathian Ridge.

Donnie gets out and walks to the front of the car... looking down at the forest below... as the sun begins to rise.

He sits on the hood of the Taurus and lights a cigarette.

DONNIE
28 days... 5 hours... 42 minutes... 12 seconds. We're almost home Gretchen.

INT: NORTHWEST FLIGHT 1898 -- EARLY MORNING

Samantha Darko is fast asleep in first class at cruising altitude. Her head rests on Rose's shoulder.

She looks out the window at the rising sun.

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EARLY MORNING

[Throughout the next sequence... an intricate and strangely organic PORTAL begins to form above the Darko house and in the sky above the entire neighborhood. It is a dense network of liquid puzzle. This special effect is invisible to everyone except the audience.]

Police Cars pull up in front of the house... shining a spotlight.

INT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EARLY MORNING

The bright spotlight floods through the windows... wrestling Elizabeth from her place on the couch.

She covers her eyes in confusion.

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- EARLY MORNING

Police Officers approach the house with their guns drawn.

EXT: CARPATHIAN RIDGE -- DAWN

On the hood of the car... Donnie stares longingly out at the sun as it rises over the distant canyon.

He looks down at his broken watch.

Suddenly the sky becomes white with artificial light and BILLOWING FOAM-LIKE JET STREAMS.

[The sky-effects can now be seen by Donnie.]

CLOUDS TWIST AND DISTORT AS IF THE WERE BEING SUCKED UP INTO SOME UNFORESEEN STORM VORTEX.

EXT: SARASOTA DRIVE -- DAWN

Police Cruisers race down the street with their sirens blaring.

INT: VIRGINIA STATE POLICE HELICOPTER -- DAWN

The chopper flies low over the suburban streets.

RADIO VOICE
...again that's a white Taurus wagon.
Suspect is a minor...

EXT: CARPATHIAN RIDGE -- DAWN

Donnie continues to stare out into the bizarre... apocryphal sunrise... with the hint of a smile.

Slowly... the light fades back to normal... as the rumble of the police helicopter approaches from above.

Donnie looks up at the chopper and then gets off the hood... getting into the driver's seat of the car.

He carefully fastens Gretchen's seat belt.

DONNIE
You were a great tour guide Gretchen.
(beat)
In a few minutes you'll be asleep in your bed. You'll wake up and eat breakfast with your mom, and you'll hear about me on the morning news.
(beat)
You'll never know who I was.. or could have been. You'll never know any of this.
(beat)
But I'll always be connected to you... because you were my tour guide.

He then starts the engine... and puts the car into drive.

[The following is a MONTAGE].

ON FLIGHT 1898 THERE IS A SUDDEN BUMP AS THE PLANE LURCHES OVER TO ONE SIDE... SENDING SAMANTHA OVER ONTO HER MOTHER.

THE CABIN ROARS WITH ENGINE NOISE.

PASSENGERS SCREAM OUT IN TERROR. BAGGAGE FLIES OUT OF THE OVERHEAD COMPARTMENTS AS THE CABIN LURCHES OVER TO THE SIDE.

CUT TO:

DONNIE STEPS ON THE GAS AND THE TAURUS BEGINS ITS DESCENT DOWN THE DIRT ROAD TOWARD THE CLIFF RAVINE.

CUT TO:

THE LEFT JET ENGINE FROM FLIGHT 1898 FALLS DOWNWARD THROUGH THE SKY.

BENEATH IT... THE FOAM-LIKE JET-STREAMS FLOW INWARD INTO A HEXAGONAL VORTEX OF LIGHT.

CUT TO:

THE TAURUS PICKS OF SPEED... LURCHING DOWN THE BUMPY DIRT SLOPE TOWARD THE EDGE. DONNIE'S VECTOR SPEAR GLIDES OUT THROUGH THE TAURUS AND INTO THE CANYON DROP.

CUT TO:

ON FLIGHT 1898 ROSE HOLDS ONTO SAMANTHA... WHO IS SCREAMING AND CRYING.

THE PLANE SHAKES VIOLENTLY AS PASSENGERS HOLD ON FOR THEIR LIVES.

THE OXYGEN MASKS FALL DOWN FROM THE BULKHEAD.

CUT TO:

THE FALLING JET ENGINE APPROACHES THE HEXAGONAL PLATE OF LIGHT WHICH ACCELERATES DOWNWARD... FORMING A TUNNEL WITH WALLS MADE OF SWIRLING LIQUID MARBLE.

THE JET ENGINE APPROACHES THE HEXAGONAL PLATE LIKE A PREDATOR OVERTAKING ITS PREY.

CUT TO:

THE HELICOPTER HOVERS OVER THE FOREST AS THE TAURUS APPROACHES THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF GOING VERY FAST. THE SPEAR TURNS DOWNWARD.

CUT TO:

DONNIE TAKES HIS HANDS OFF THE STEERING WHEEL... AND LEANS BACK.

CUT TO:

THE TAURUS GOES OFF THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF... FLOATING PEACEFULLY FOR A MOMENT BEFORE IT BEGINS TO PLUMMET DOWNWARD.

DONNIE'S SPEAR TWISTS LIKE A RATTLESNAKE.

THE TAURUS MAKES IMPACT WITH THE ROCK CANYON NOSE FIRST... CRUSHING LIKE A TIN CAN... AND THEN SPINNING FORWARD INTO THE AIR LIKE A CORPSE OF TWISTED METAL.

CUT TO:

THE JET ENGINE PASSES INTO THE HEXAGONAL PLATE.

CUT TO:

THE TAURUS RETREATS IN REVERSE MOTION... BACKWARDS IN TIME.

THE ENTIRE SUBURBAN LANDSCAPE RETREATS BACKWARD IN A FURY OF SPEED... LIKE GOD HIT THE REWIND BUTTON.

THE TITLE CARD IMAGES SCROLL BACKWARD AT A FRENETIC PACE.

28 OCT 1988

27 OCT 1988

26 OCT 1988

25 OCT 1988

24 OCT 1988

23 OCT 1988

22 OCT 1988

21 OCT 1988

20 OCT 1988

19 OCT 1988

18 OCT 1988

17 OCT 1988

16 OCT 1988

15 OCT 1988

14 OCT 1988

13 OCT 1988

12 OCT 1988

11 OCT 1988

10 OCT 1988

09 OCT 1988

08 OCT 1988

07 OCT 1988

06 OCT 1988

05 OCT 1988

04 OCT 1988

03 OCT 1988

02 OCT 1988

CUT TO:

THE JET ENGINE FALLS SILENTLY THROUGH THE NIGHT DOWN TOWARD THE DARKO HOUSE.

DONNIE LAYS QUIETLY ASLEEP IN HIS BED... AND THEN LEANS UP, AWAKENING FROM A DREAM. HE IS DISORIENTED FOR A MOMENT, AND THEN HE LOOKS UP AT THE CEILING...

... JUST BEFORE THE ENGINE CRASHES THROUGH.

DOWNSTAIRS...

EDDIE JUMPS UP FROM THE LA-Z-BOY... STARTLED AWAKE BY THE IMPACT.

HE QUICKLY RUNS UPSTAIRS.

ROSE TURNS ON THE LIGHT... SITTING UP IN BED.

ROSE
Eddie?

SAMANTHA DARKO SCREAMS FROM HER ROOM.

WHEN EDDIE REACHES THE TOP OF THE STAIRS... ROSE AND ELIZABETH HAVE ALREADY COME OUT OF THEIR ROOMS... DISORIENTED.

DRUNK FROM A NIGHT OF PARTYING... ELIZABETH STAGGERS DOWN THE HALL... HOLDING ONTO THE WALL.

ELIZABETH
Was that thunder?

Eddie slowly pushes Donnie's door open... revealing his destroyed room... the gaping hole in the cei`ing... plaster... sheet-rock and wooden beams.

A MAMMOTH JET ENGINE has plummeted all the way down through the house, creating a CAVERNOUS HOLE that splits Donnie's room in half. The smoke from the wreckage begins to clear.

DONNIE (V.O.)
Dear Roberta Sparrow. My name is Donnie Darko... and I'm fourteen years old. I live here in Middlesex... and the other day I found your book here in the local library... I am interested in what you had to say in chapter one about a man's channel through time... and what he must do if one day he discovers that he can see it... growing from his own stomach and creeping out into an unknown dimension. That he must follow it... until he discovers the rules of this new world.

On the other side of this CAVERNOUS HOLE, is DONNIE... IMPALED THROUGH THE STOMACH BY A WOODEN BEAM THAT WAS ONCE PART OF THE FLOOR BENEATH HIS BED. There is BLOOD gushing from his mouth, as his face is CONTORTED into the expression of a CHILD who has just awakened from a horrible nightmare.

THE WORLD GOES SILENT AS EDDIE AND ROSE STARE ACROSS THE EXPANSE OF WRECKAGE, UNABLE TO RUN TO THEIR SON'S AID... TRYING TO DO WHAT THEY CAN TO KEEP HIM FROM LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS... AND REALIZING THAT IT IS TOO LATE.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE TO:

EXT: THE DARKO HOUSE -- MORNING

The same disaster scene as before... only more media, more neighbors, and a coroner.

People are crying, standing around in shock... disbelief.

From the other end of the street, someone comes riding along on a bike... slowly taking in the entire scene.

She pulls up to the curb where two young kids are standing around.

GIRL ON BIKE
Hi... what's going on here?

KID #1
Horrible accident. My neighbor got killed.

GIRL ON BIKE
What happened?

KID #2
He got smooshed by a jet engine.

She stares at the house, where paramedics wheel a body out of the front door.

GIRL ON BIKE
What was his name?

KID #1
Donnie. Donnie Darko.

KID #2
Did you know him?

She stares at them for several moments... and then shakes her head.

We pull back, revealing the entire scene, as GRETCHEN ROSS rounds a loop on her bike and slowly rides off down the street... eventually disappearing over the hill.

FADE OUT: